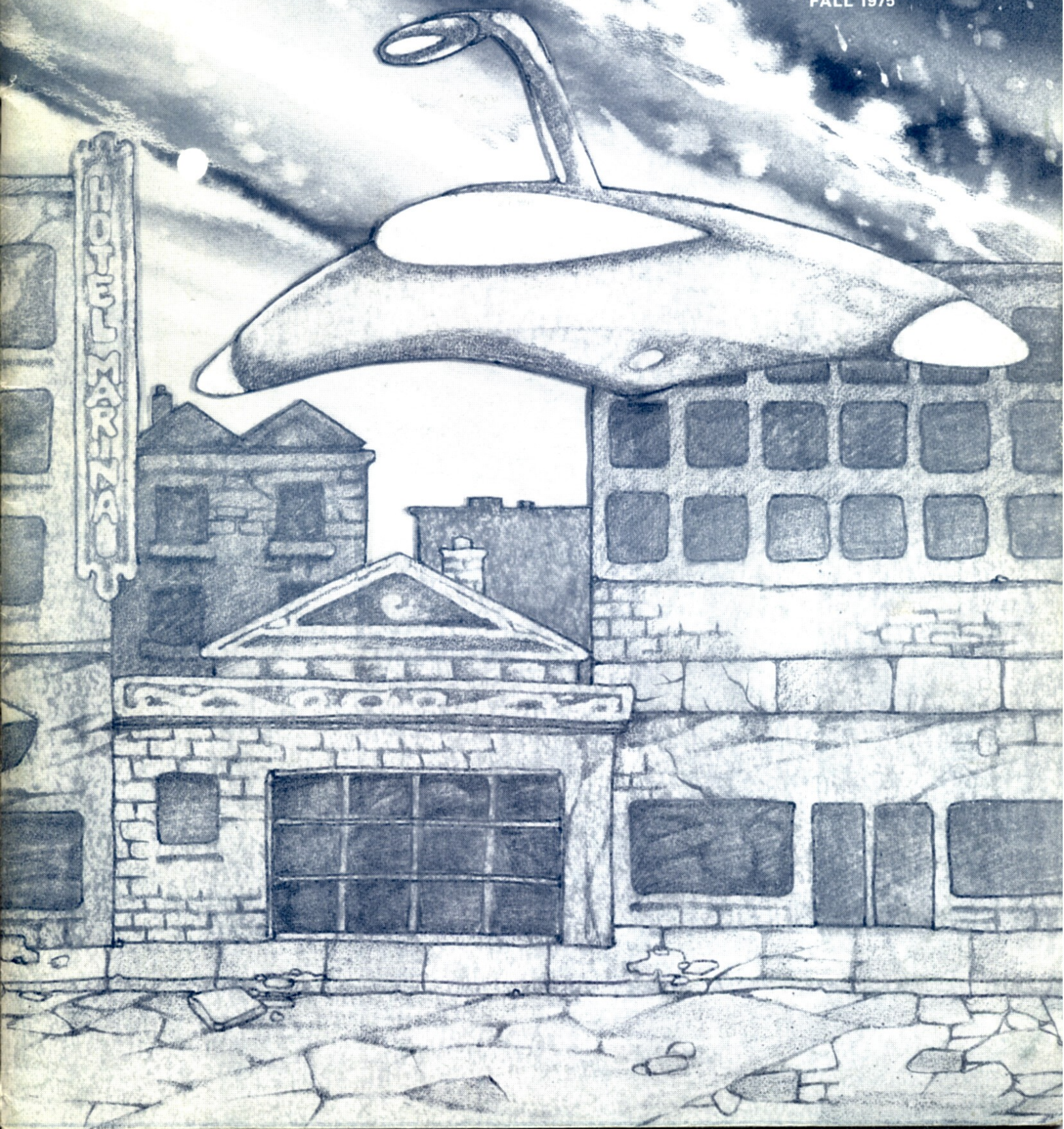


# FANTASCENE

FALL 1975









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# FANTASCENE 1



Scene 1: The Veil Nebula deep in outer space.  
 Dissolve to: The Andromeda Galaxy, 2 million light years from Earth.  
 Dissolve to: The Triffid Nebula.  
 Dissolve to: The Earth as seen from the far side of the moon.  
 Title:

# THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL

by Elaine Edford and Bob Scott

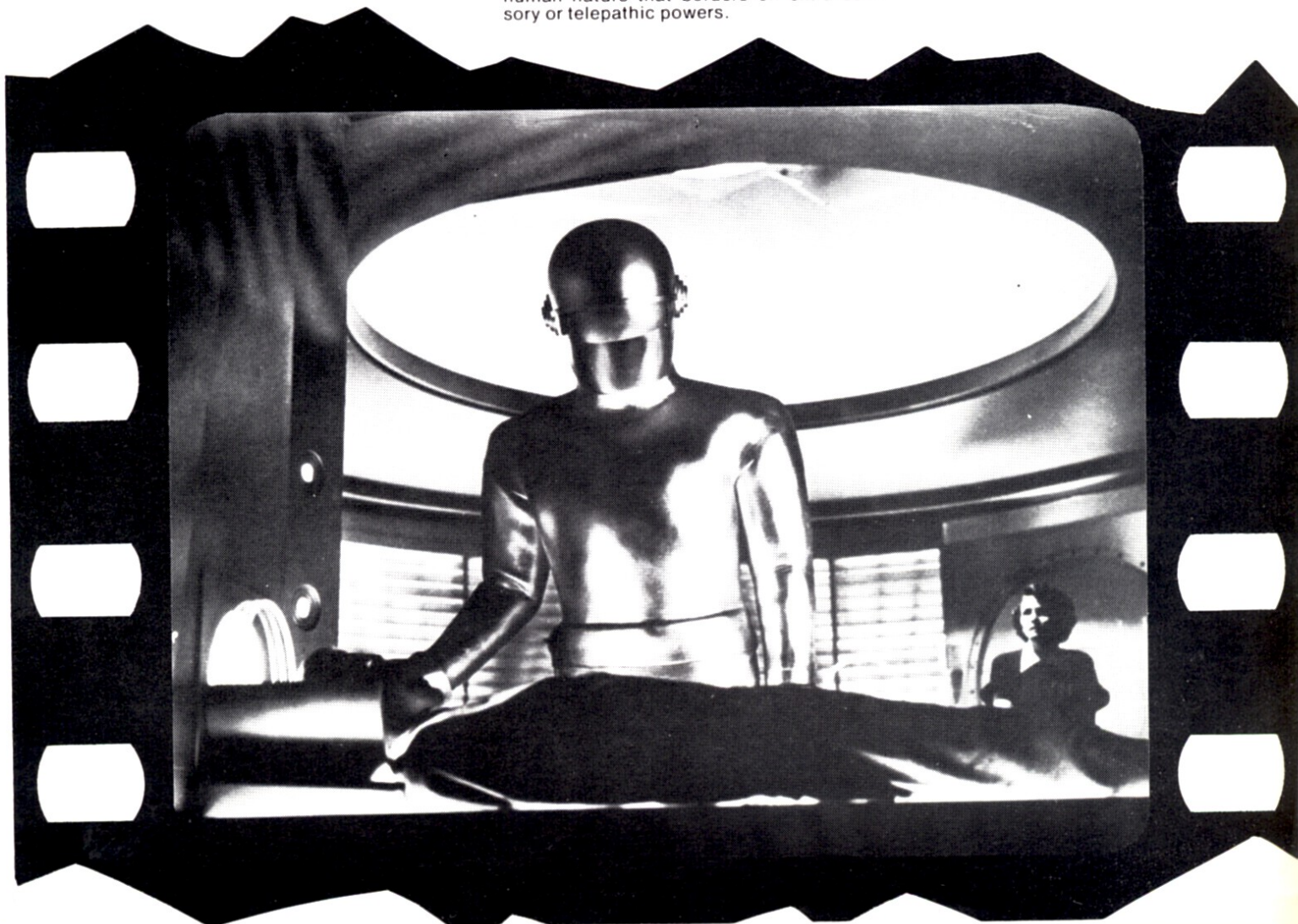
THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL has achieved a legendary status over the years since its release. It is classically straightforward; simple, well-constructed and believable. It is also the one science-fiction film that portrays a "creature" from another world as not only a superior and benevolent being, but a very human one as well.

In a departure from special-effects oriented productions, director Robert Wise played up exactly those qualities of character and human interest that rarely surface in science-fiction films. Whether we feel inclined to analyze it as to its political morality or its "allegorical" content, or view it as well-made entertainment doesn't seem to matter—it works on all these levels.

Unlike the many stiff, formally-speaking and unemotional aliens pictured in the majority of science-fiction films, Michael Rennie's Klaatu stands out markedly.

Klaatu embodies all the nobler human qualities, yet certainly remains a man after all, making no claim to perfection when it comes to the aggressive and violent tendencies his species ultimately possesses.

Klaatu displays kindness, the normal range of human emotions and the kind of subdued sense of ironic humor that indicates the wisdom which comes from experience as well as from acquired knowledge. His attitude toward the people of Earth and their "petty squabbles" is less condescending than simply "I'm wise to them." Disguised as Mr. Carpenter, he silently assesses the people sitting around a breakfast table by saying nothing, merely observing and letting each one indict themselves with the quirks and faults of human nature. He only half hears the sensationalistic news broadcasts lambasting the "escaped space monster" as if their sheer irrelevance hardly warranted his time. Other scenes hint of an insight into human nature that borders on extra sensory or telepathic powers.





Among the other major and minor characters in the film only Prof. Barnhardt (Sam Jaffe) and Helen (Patricia Neal) appear to be of kindred spirit with Klaatu—Helen's is that born of natural intuition, and Barnhardt's stems from deep curiosity and understanding.

Hugh Marlowe, as Helen's fiancé, embodies the typical 'man of the day' attitude and just about summarizes everything that is wrong with the human race. Once he discovers Mr. Carpenter's identity he quickly decides to turn him in against Helen's pleas not to, dismissing his responsibility to humanity without a second thought. "I don't care about the rest of the world! You'll feel different when you see my picture in the papers—you're going to marry a big hero."

Aside from featuring good performances from a quality cast, *THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL* was aided by the use of real life newscasters, such as Drew Pearson and H. G. Kaltenborn—a first for a science-fiction picture that adds a very important element of documentation. By frequently interrupting the story to show world wide reaction through news reports Robert Wise evokes a true sense of here and now realism.

One of the truly memorable aspects of the film is its musical score by Bernard Hermann. He recently recreated the soundtrack score for an album and commented about the music: "My goal ... was to characterize a man from another world, and the music had to reflect an unearthly feeling without relying on gimmicks. The result ... seems to have been successful and most certainly predicted the shape of things to come for electronic scoring ... With this score, I attempted to balance a conventional orchestra consisting of piano, harps, brass, and a large timpani section including two theremins, electronic violin, electronic bass and electronic guitar. There were no woodwinds."

Above right: The poster art featured all the clichés of the genre along with an effective literal rendering of the title. Bottom right: The U.F.O. has landed in Washington, D.C. The image of the saucer was combined with background footage shot in Washington. Scenes employing the 350' diameter, 25' high mock-up were shot at 20th Century Fox Studios. Left: The film influenced sci-fi art of the 50's—in this case the work of Alex Shomburg.

**FROM OUT OF SPACE....  
A WARNING AND AN ULTIMATUM!**

**THE  
DAY  
THE  
EARTH  
STOOD  
STILL**

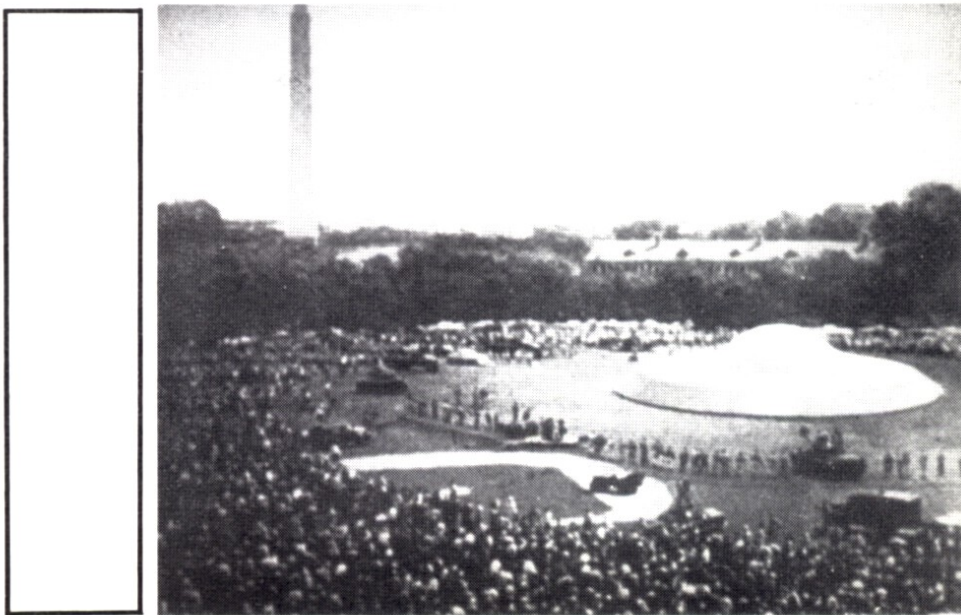


WITH  
**MICHAEL RENNIE · PATRICIA NEAL · HUGH MARLOWE**

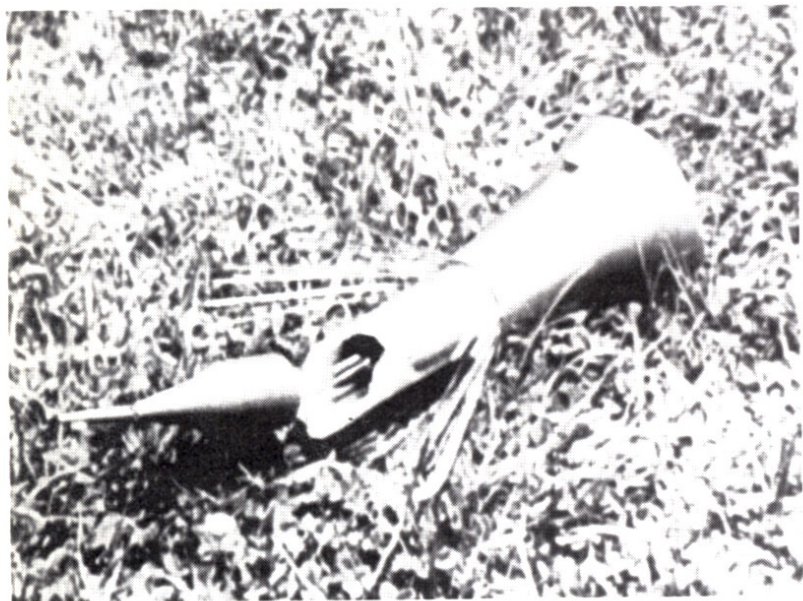
SAM JAFFE · BILLY GRAY · FRANCES BAYLER · LOCK MARTIN

PRODUCED BY JULIAN BLAUSTEIN · DIRECTED BY ROBERT WISE · SCREEN PLAY BY EDMUND H. NORTH

20th CENTURY FOX







Above: The U.S. Military immediately surrounds the mystery ship with heavy artillery. They destroy Klaatu's gift for the president, through which "He could've studied life on other worlds." Klaatu's message, "I come in peace," is greeted by gunfire.

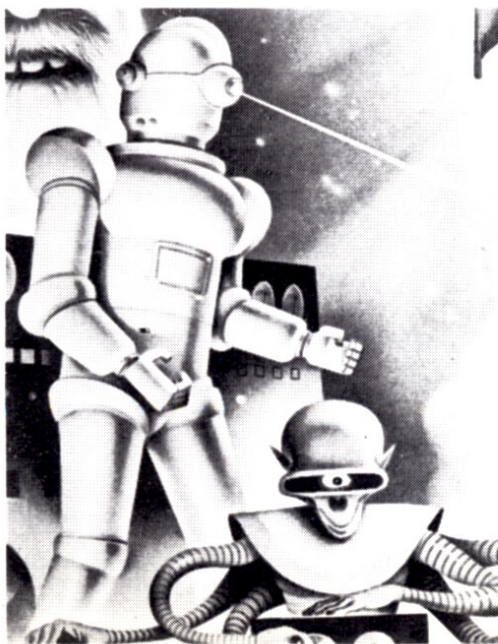
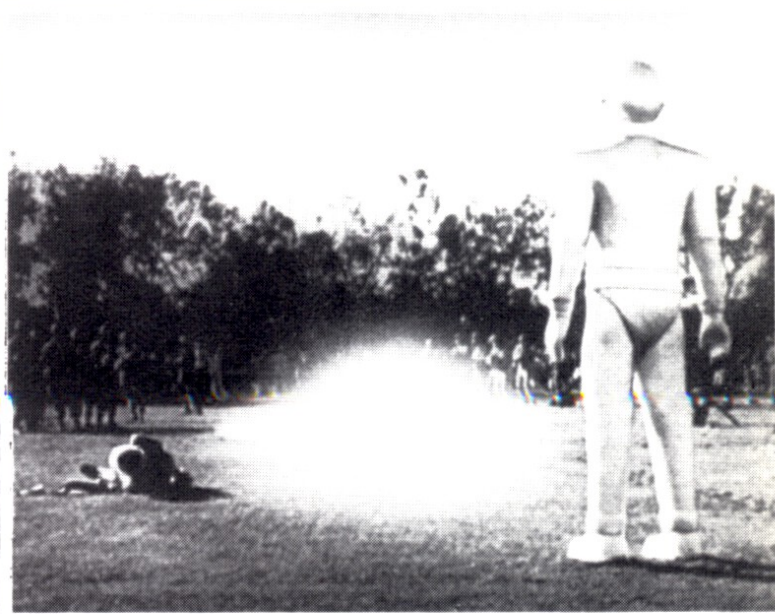
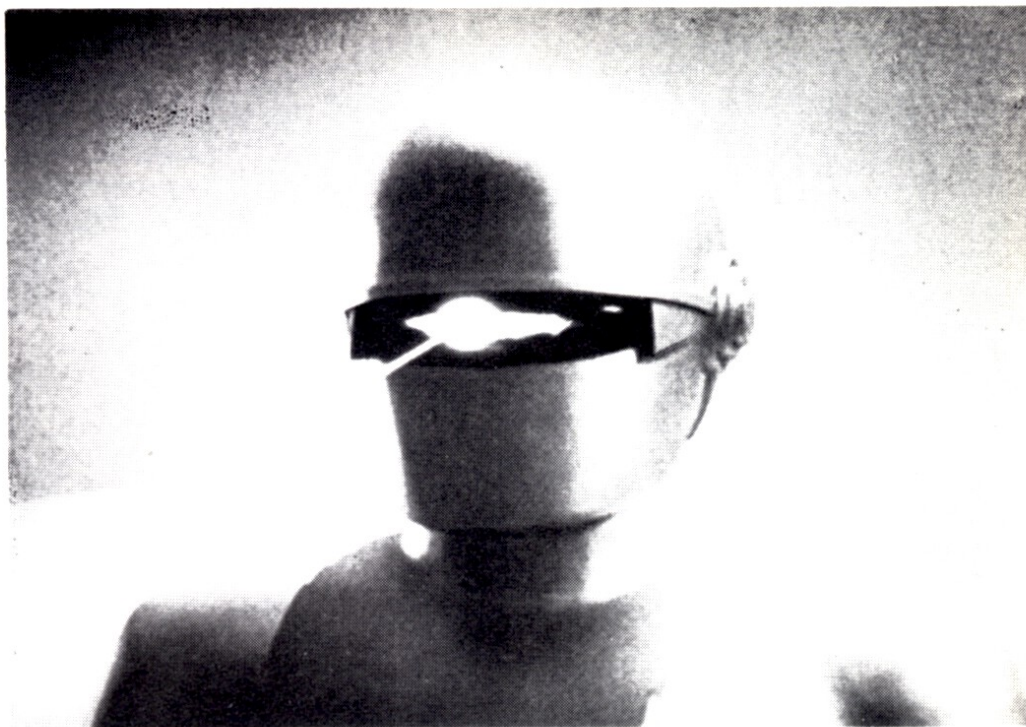
While *THE DAY THE EARTH STOOD STILL* differed vastly from the story it was based on—Harry Bates' "Farewell to the Master"—Klaatu's first appearance in the film is very similar to the original:

"...an opening appeared in the wall of the ship, and a ramp slid down, and out stepped a man, godlike in appearance and human in form, closely followed by a giant robot. . . . It was immediately apparent to all the assembled thousands that the stranger was friendly. The first thing he did was to raise his right arm high in the universal gesture of peace. . . . And then occurred the thing which shall always be to the shame of the human race. From a treetop a hundred yards away came a wink of violet light and Klaatu fell."

Critics who viewed the film were generally favorable and a bit surprised by its approach. *Time* magazine commented: "Klaatu is no villainous monster. He is an ultra-civilized human being who makes the Earthmen, by contrast, look like a monstrous race of Yahoos . . . Klaatu's escape touches off a vast monster-hunt, demonstrating the Earthling's frightening capacity for panic, ignorance, unreasoning hostility and pygmy-minded self-seeking." Hollis Alpert, in *Saturday Review*, stated: "(Klaatu demonstrates) some of his powers to convince our world leaders. I will not divulge the way by which he proves his point, except to say that he does it in a thoroughly nice and gentlemanly way. I enjoyed it all . . ." On the negative side, missing the point (and enjoyment) was the *New York Times* critic, Bozley Crowther: "Such benignity in a creature from whom menace is expected, obviously, might sit rather well in a picture which is set in a fairly literal frame. But in a fable of such absurd assumptions as this one amusingly presents, cold chills might be more appropriate than luke warm philosophy . . . Like-wise Michael Rennie who plays this genteel soul, while charmingly suave and cosmopolitan, is likely to cause unguarded yawns . . . Nice chap . . . but a bit on the soft side, don'tcha know . . . His giant mechanical assistant . . . is also oddly un-menacing, for all his grossness and death-ray eye. We've seen better monsters in theatre audiences on 42nd street."

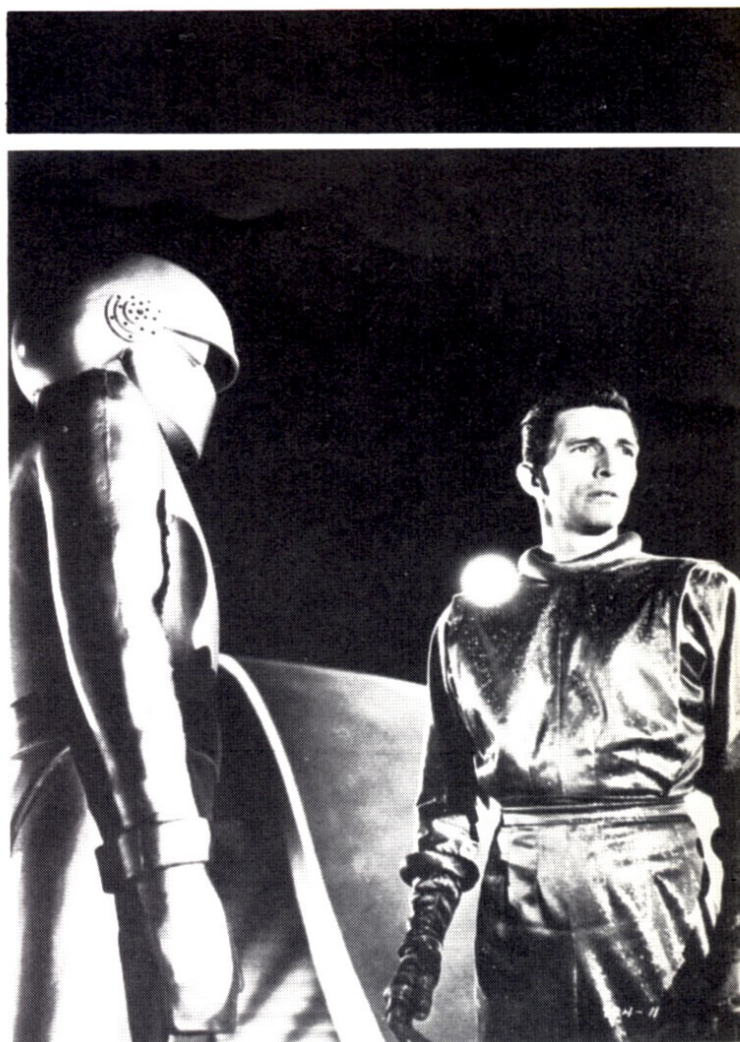
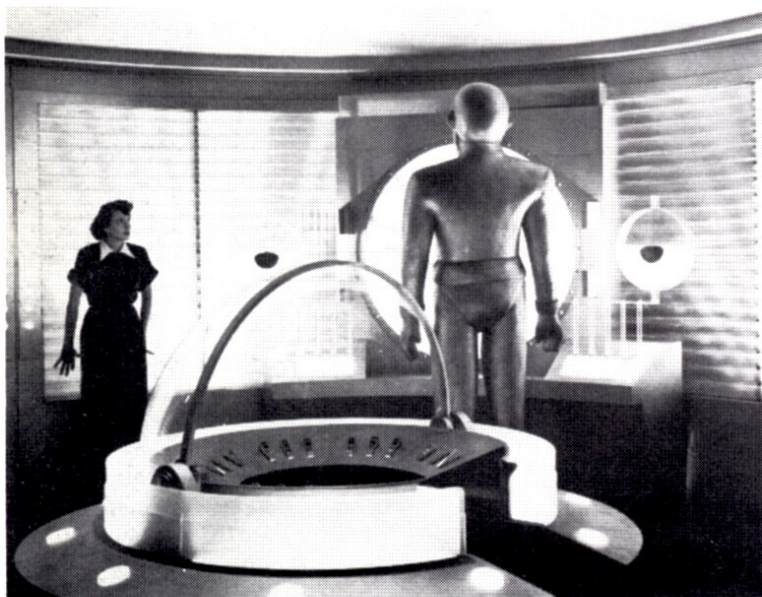
Daily advertising in the *N.Y. Times*, typically, announced the upcoming film with catch lines like "The Monster Walks Again," "Were You Frightened By The Flying Disc Over New Jersey?" and "Klaatu . . . Barada . . . Nikto . . . Could These 3 Words Save The Earth From Destruction By Another Planet?"





Above Top: Gort's disintegration ray flickers ominously—its awesome power (middle) reduces a cannon to a melted heap. Bottom left: Alex Shomburg's fine Gort-like rendering for the Winston science-fiction books. Right: Publicity shot of Gort. The metallic body was fiberglass cloth shaped and sewn together around a mold of Gort's body. This cloth was hardened with varnish, cut and peeled off the mold, then treated with latex rubber for flexibility. Numerous coats of silvery paint created the look of polished metal. Its head was constructed from sheet metal—its single "eye" was a high-intensity, flickering light projected through a prismatically diffusing glass.





Above: The 8½' tall Gort was portrayed by a former Hollywood doorman named Lock Martin. A row of openings in Gort's chin served for ventilation and acted as eyeholes for Martin. Below: Klaatu contacts and reports to his home planet.



Left top: Klaatu assumes the identity of Mr. Carpenter in order to mingle with the Earthlings. The parallels with the Christ myth are many: He brings a message of peace to all mankind, lives as a common man, is killed, "reborn" and shortly thereafter ascends into heavens—via his flying saucer. Middle: Patricia Neal and Gort in the spaceship control room. Lyle Wheeler and Addison Hehr's production designs remain essentially undated 25 years after the film's release. Portions of this set were later incorporated in KRONOS [1957]. Bottom: Mr. Carpenter is rescued by Gort.

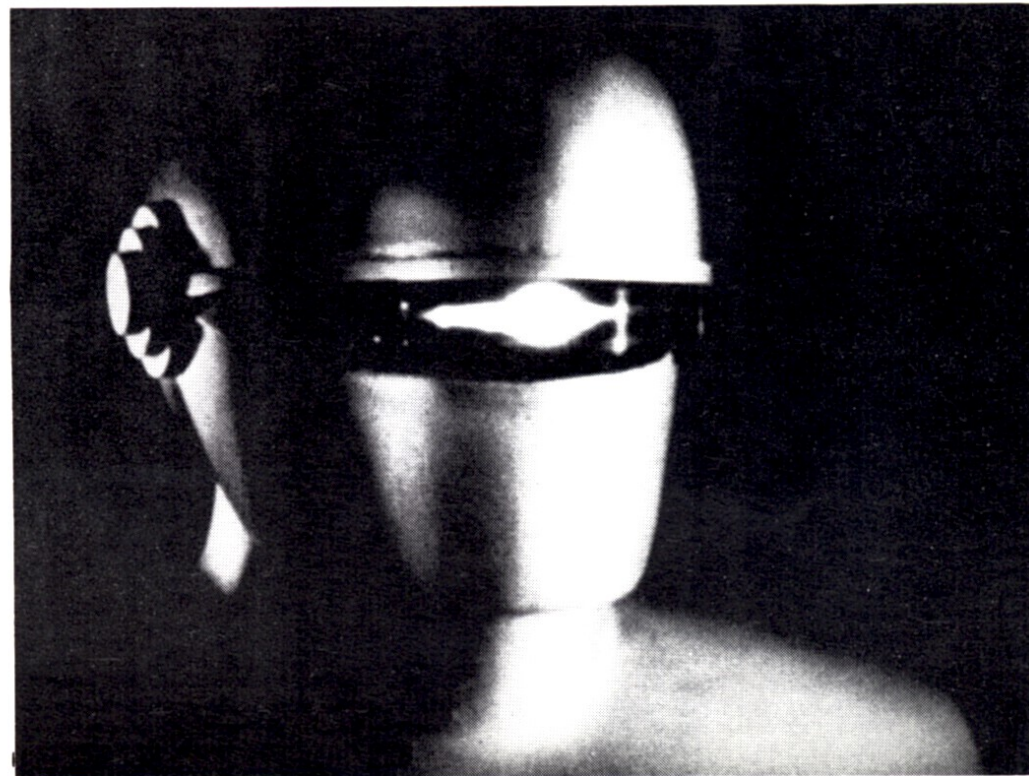
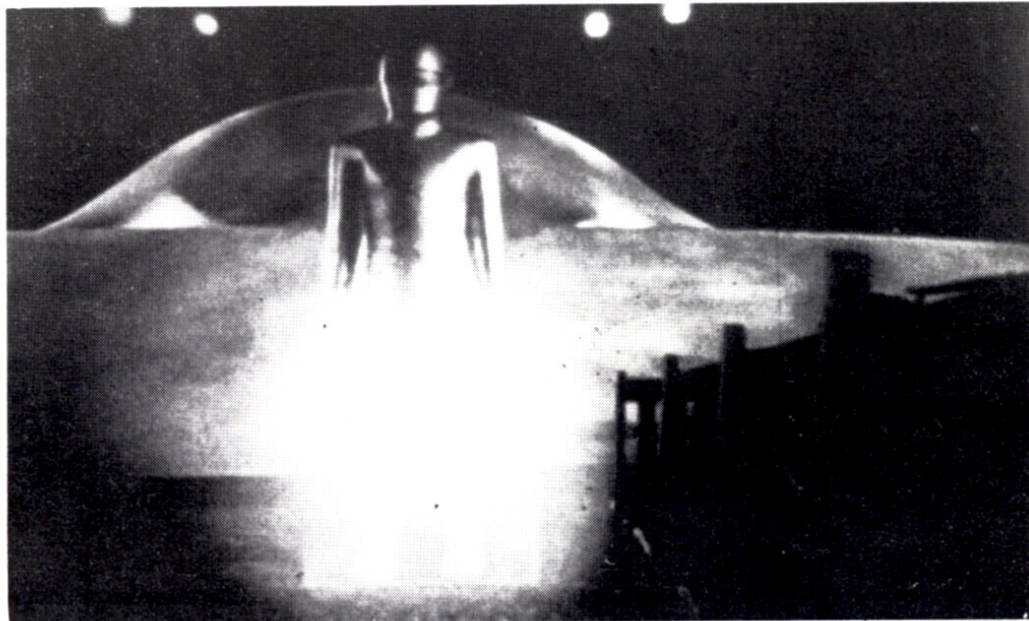
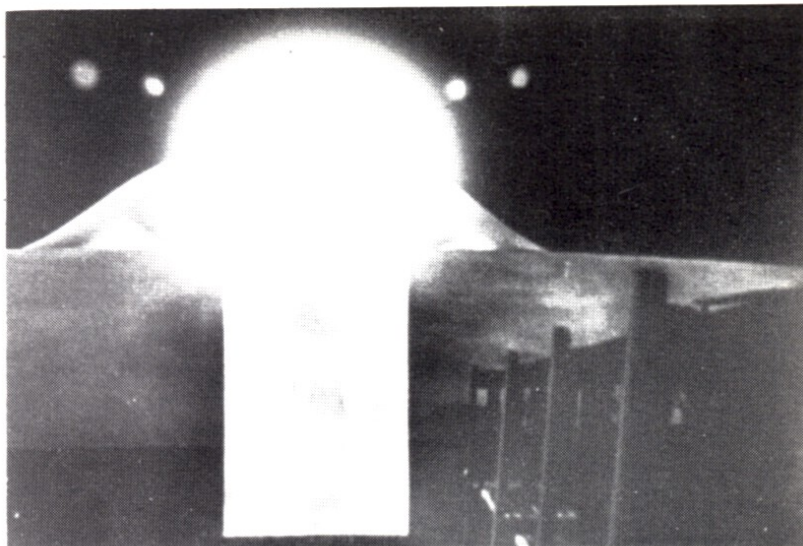


"He's locked up tight as a drum ... in a block of KL 93. It's a new plastic material stronger than steel." Klaatu warns Patricia Neal that Gort is unlimited in power, and could conceivably level the entire Earth.

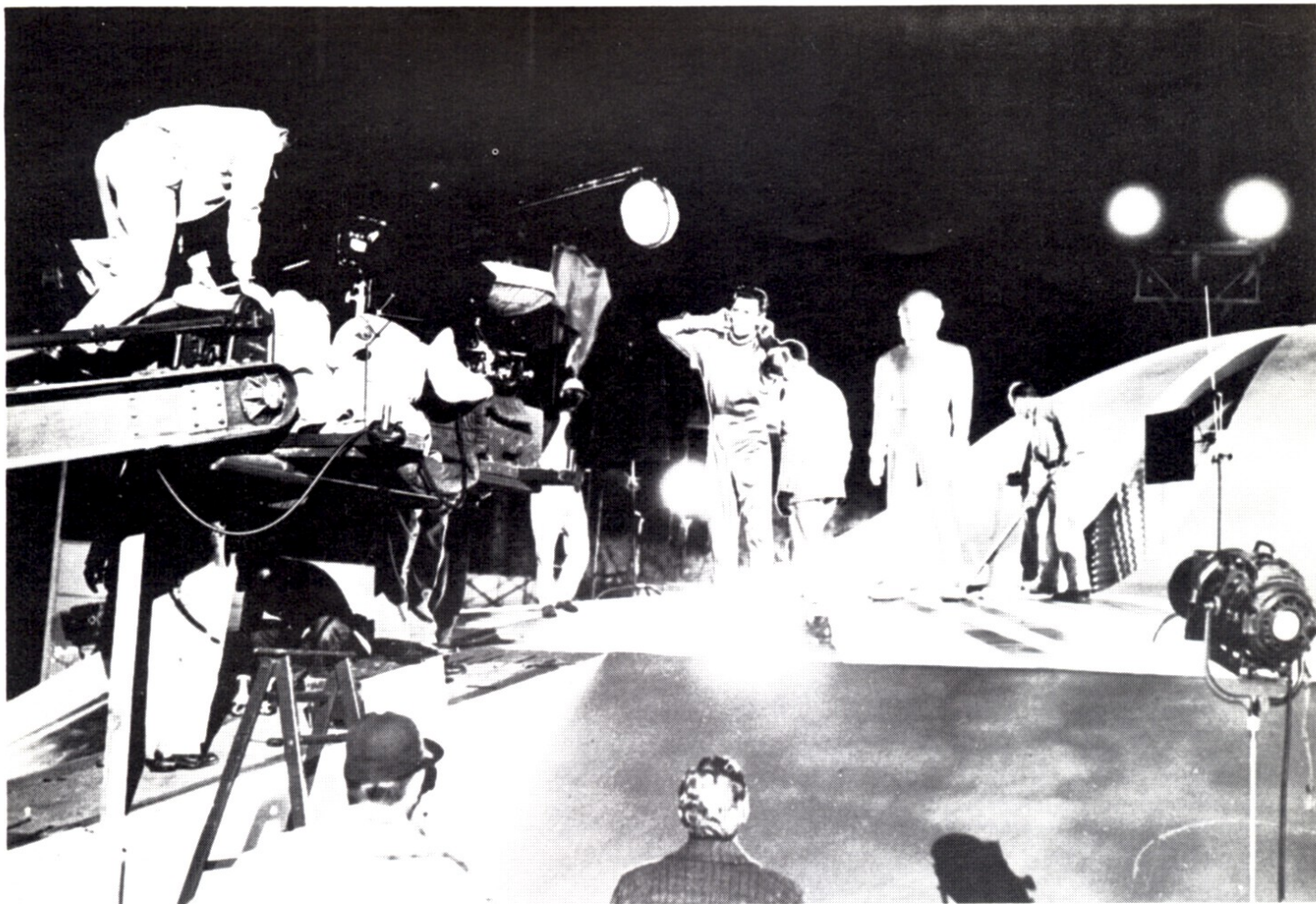
It hardly seems relevant to view Klaatu's proposed system for peace as fascist, for the overseeing guardians of peace are incorruptible, none self-seeking robots—more perfect (for their intended purpose) than any human police force could hope to be. Perhaps it is in this light that we should view his closing speech:

"I am leaving soon and you'll forgive me if I speak bluntly. The universe grows smaller every day and the threat of aggression by any group anywhere can no longer be tolerated. There must be security for all or no one is secure. Now this does not mean giving up any freedom, except the freedom to act irresponsibly. Your ancestors knew this when they made laws to govern themselves and hired policemen to enforce them. We, of the other planets, have accepted this principle. We have an organization for the mutual protection of all planets and for the complete elimination of aggression. The test of any such higher authority is, of course, the police force that supports it. For our policemen we created a race of robots. Their function is to patrol the planets in spaceships like this one and preserve the peace. In matters of aggression we have given them absolute power over us. This power can not be revoked. At the first signs of violence they act automatically against the aggressor. The penalty for provoking their action is too terrible to risk. The result is we live in peace without arms or armies, secure in the knowledge that we are free from aggression and war, free to pursue more profitable enterprises. No, we do not pretend to have achieved perfection, but we do have a system, and it works. I came here to give you these facts. It is no concern of ours how you run your own planet, but if you threaten to extend your violence this Earth of yours will be reduced to a burned-out cinder. Your choice is simple: join us and live in peace, or pursue your present course and face obliteration. We shall be waiting for your answer. The decision rests with you."

At least two later films (Disney's 20,000 LEAGUES UNDER THE SEA and AIP's MASTER OF THE WORLD) outlined a similar approach to world peace—threat of unlimited, invincible power. Roger Corman's low-budget film IT CONQUERED THE WORLD (1957) featured a similar plot idea (including a world-wide neutralizing of power, as in DAY ...), though the focus is on loss of will and individual corruption. Not surprisingly the alien visitor is a gumdrop monster.







Adding to the realism of *DAY ...* was the use of a full-sized, \$100,000 mock-up of Klaatu's ship that was filmed out-of-doors, not under artificial light on a sound stage. The microphone is encased in a wind screen, used to muffle wind noise during sound recording. The platform was the only really solid part of the ship; the rest was made of plaster of Paris sculpted atop a wood and wire-shaped framework.



Above: The saucer glows eerily in the dark, then departs. Right: Michael Rennie in an example of perfect casting. The film immortalized him as filmdom's most memorable emissary from space. Rennie, a British actor who was 42 years old when the film was made, later starred in other science-fiction pictures such as Pal's *THE POWER* and *CYBORG 2087*. Rennie died in 1971. The suit he wore was a metallic fibre interwoven with cloth, designed by Perkins Bailey.



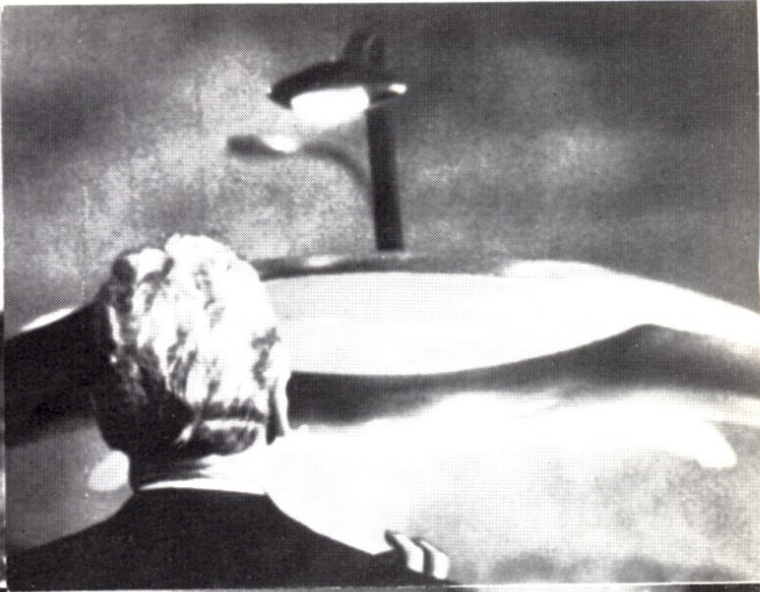
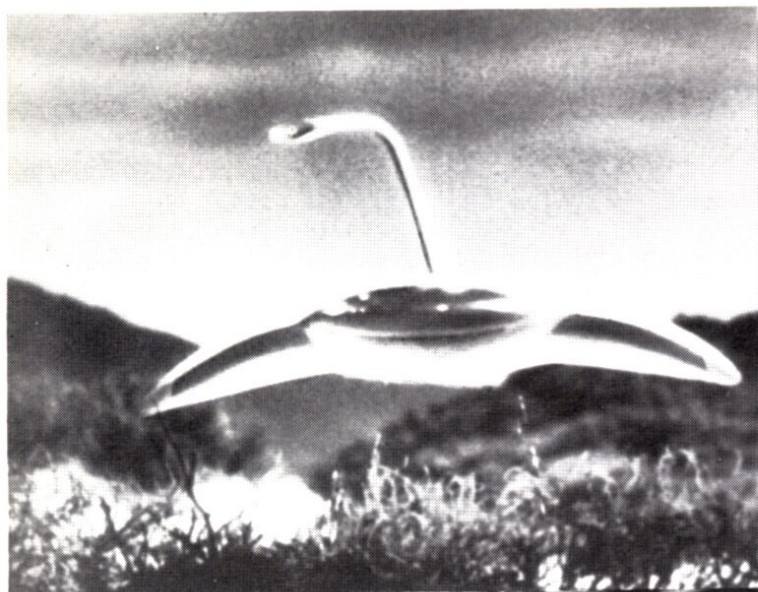
"In the first World War and for the first time in the history of Man, nations combined to fight against nations using the crude weapons of those days. The second World War involved every continent on the globe and men turned to science for new devices of warfare which reached an unparalleled peak in their capacity for destruction. And now, fought with the terrible weapons of super-science, menacing all mankind and every creature on Earth, comes the...

# WAR <sup>O</sup>F <sup>T</sup>HE WORLDS

"Who would have believed in the middle of the 20th century that human affairs were being watched keenly and closely by intelligences greater than Man's. Yet, across the gulf of space on the planet Mars, intellects vast and cool and unsympathetic regarded our Earth with envious eyes, slowly and surely drawing their plans against us... It did not occur to mankind that a swift fate might be hanging over us or that from the blackness of outer space we were being scrutinized and studied, until the time of our nearest approach to the orbit of Mars during a pleasant summer season..."



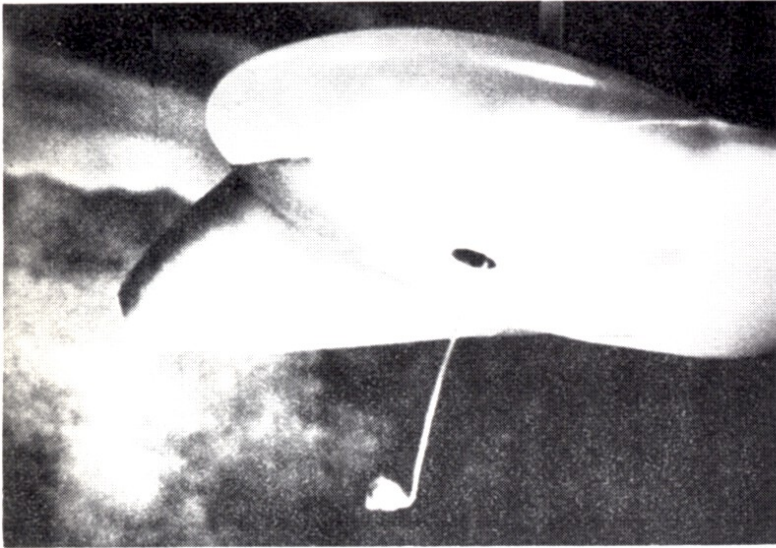




Top left: The saucers emerge from the pit for the first time. Note the "force lines" streaming from under the ship. Middle and bottom left: "Everybody understands when you wave the white flag you want to be friends." The Martians apparently don't and disintegrate the 3 Earthlings. Top right: A priest tries to communicate with the invaders, "If they're more advanced than us they should be nearer the creator for that reason. I think we should make them understand we mean them no harm." This one of the few scenes in the film to employ a rear-view projection screen—other sequences used the traveling matte process almost exclusively. \$1,400,000 was spent to produce the incredible effects in the film.



Right: "...and then came a blinding glare of vivid green light. Everything in the kitchen leaped out, clearly visible in green and black, and vanished again. And then followed such a concussion as I have never heard before or since. So close on the heels of this as to seem instantaneous came a thud behind me, a clash of glass, a crash and rattle of falling masonry all about us, and the plaster of the ceiling came down upon us, smashing into a multitude of fragments upon our heads." From H. G. Wells' novel.

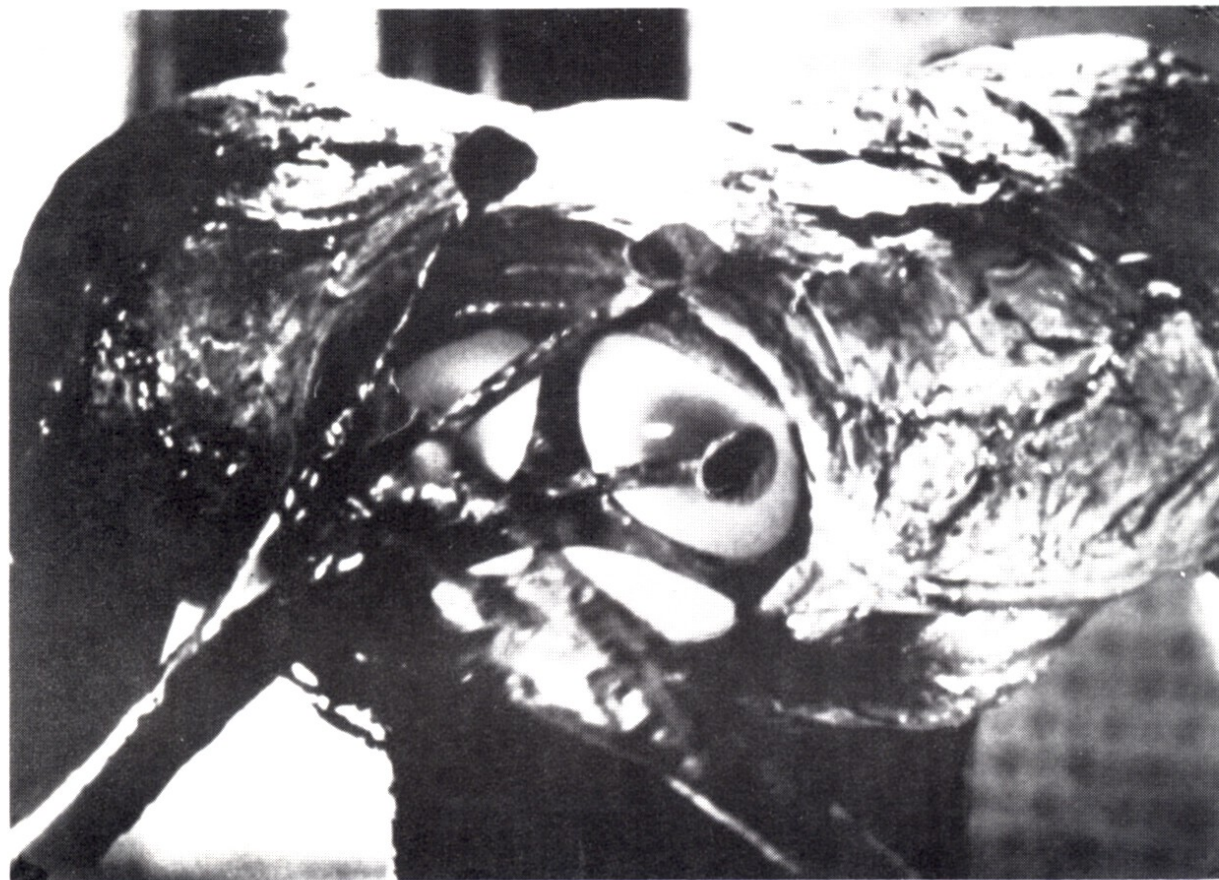
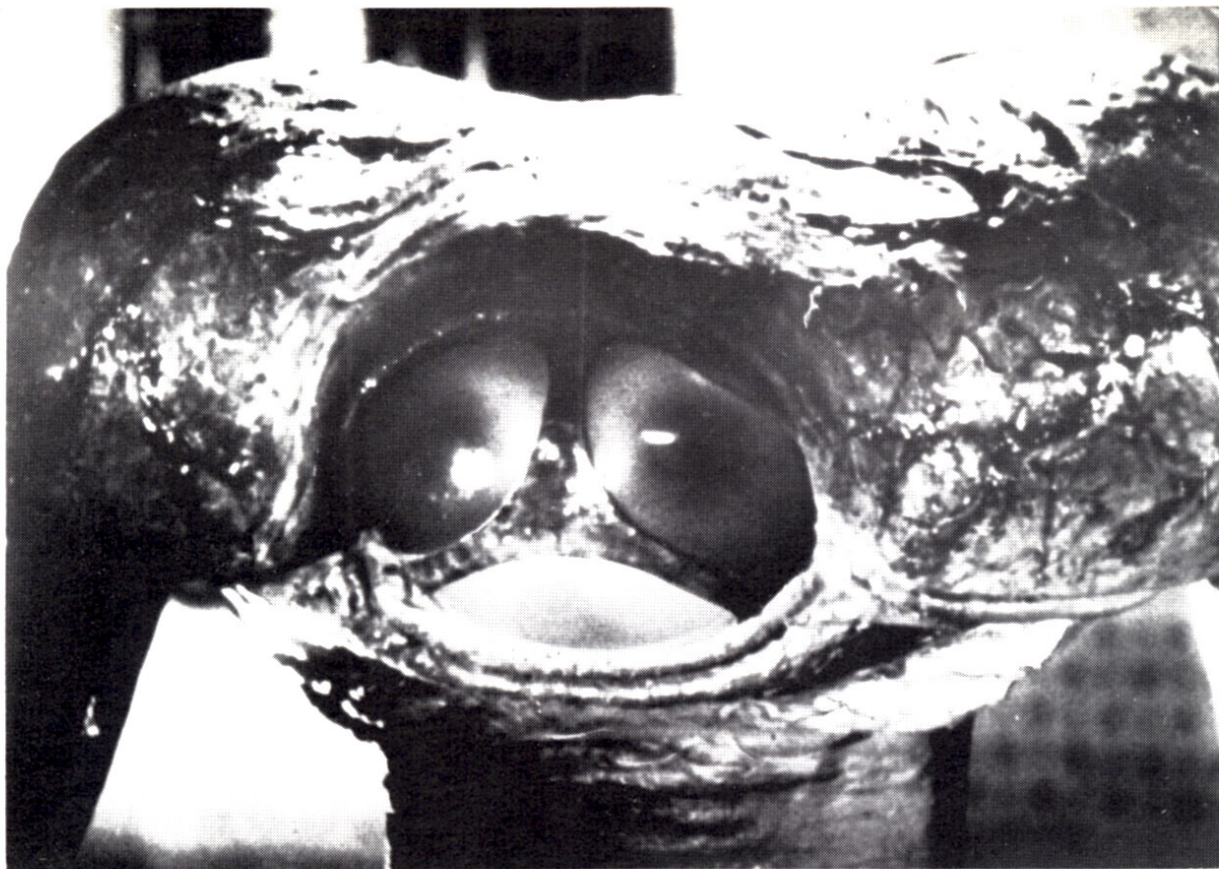


Left: The Martians lower a television scanner into the wreckage of the farmhouse to study the two trapped humans.



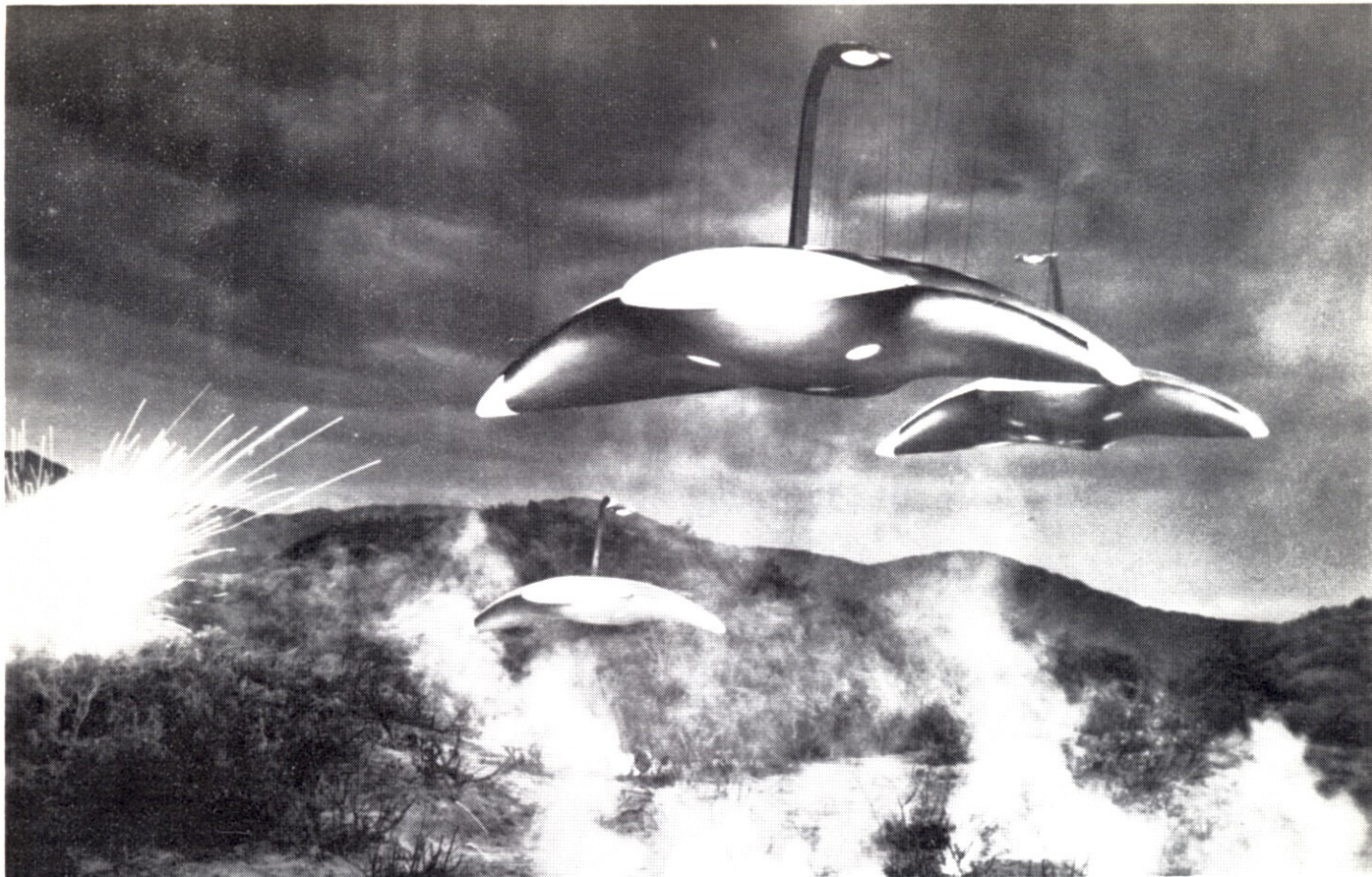
Right: Sylvia (Ann Robinson) screams in terror after confronting the Martians tri-lensed camera face to face. As is revealed later, the Martian's view of the humans is shown to be quite bizarre; a distorted, fish-eyed image accompanied by a "shift in the color spectrum."





Dr. DuPrey: "They might be mental giants, but by our standards, physically, they must be very primitive." Commented George Pal: "We made our [Martian] a huge crab-like being with one giant Cyclops eye with three separate lenses... the handiwork of our talented young unit art director Albert Nozaki who worked from start to finish under Paramount supervising art director Hal Pereira. After Nozaki finished his design I called in a sculptor, make-up man and artist named Charles Gemora... He built it out of papier-mâché and sheet rubber, created arms that actually pulsated—through the use of rubber tubing in them—and painted the whole thing lobster red."

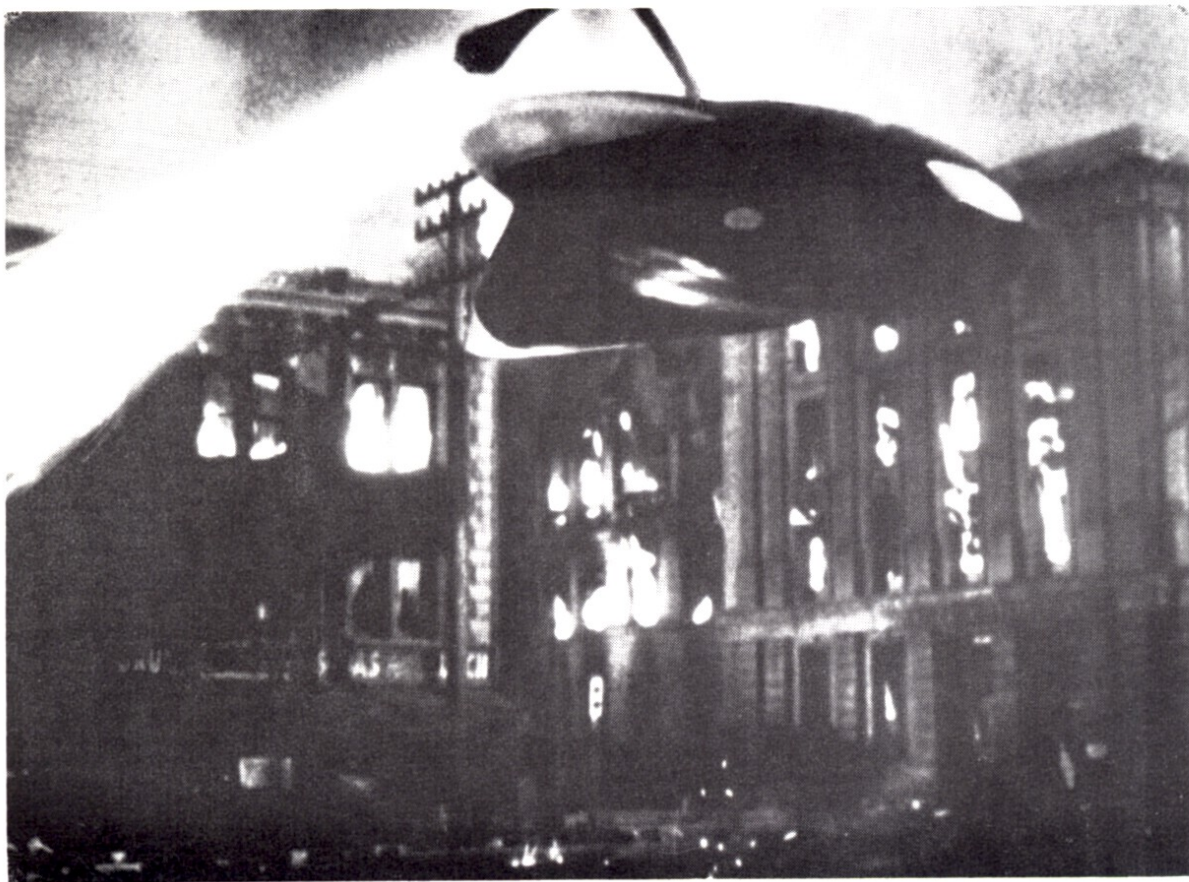




Above: 15 fine wires suspended the saucers and sent them the electrical impulses needed to operate the lights, cobra head, "goose-neck", heat-ray etc. Clayton Forrester (Gene Barry) is the first one to realize the supreme nature of the Martian's disintegrator weapon: "It neutralizes masons somehow—they're the atomic glue holding matter together. Cut across their lines of magnetic force and any object will simply cease to exist. Take my word for it, General, this type of defense is useless against that kind of power! You'd better let Washington know, fast!" Below: A technician inspects the scanner mechanism.

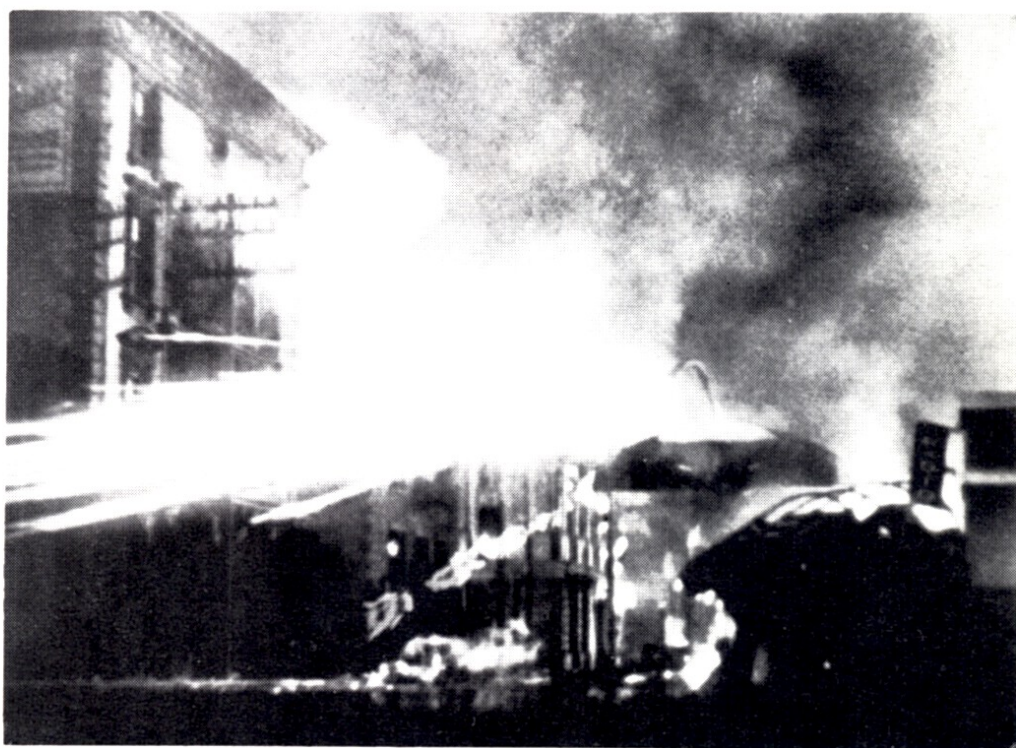




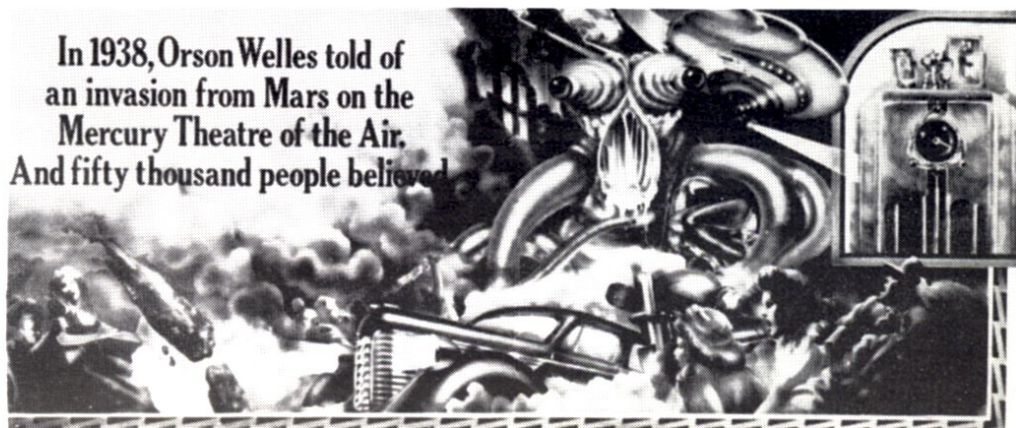


"It was the beginning of the rout of civilization, of the massacre of humanity." The film employed some of the largest, most finely detailed miniatures ever used in a science-fiction picture. The saucers themselves measured 42" across and 22" high.





In 1938, Orson Welles told of  
an invasion from Mars on the  
Mercury Theatre of the Air.  
And fifty thousand people believed.



Above: The saucers move in on Los Angeles, destroying everything and everyone in their way. General Mann: "They slash across the country like scythes, wiping out everything that's tried to get away from them." Bottom: A radio promo ad appearing several years ago featured an interesting 40's rendering of the Martian holocaust.





Sequence left: A saucer destroys a gas storage tank—an extremely realistic miniature explosion. Sequence right: An 8' tall "miniature" of L. A. city hall is blown up by a Martian heat ray. The actual destruction was the result of dynamite implanted and detonated in the structure. Pal describes the ray effect: "Those vicious-looking fire rays emanating from the machines were burning welding wire. As the wire melted, a blow torch set up behind, blew the wire out. The finished result looked highly realistic."





"THE MARTIANS APPEARED TO BE MOVING TOWARDS WINDSOR"



"PICKED THEM UP ONE BY ONE"

Above: 2 illustrations by artist Warwick Goble from 1898 edition of WAR OF THE WORLDS.

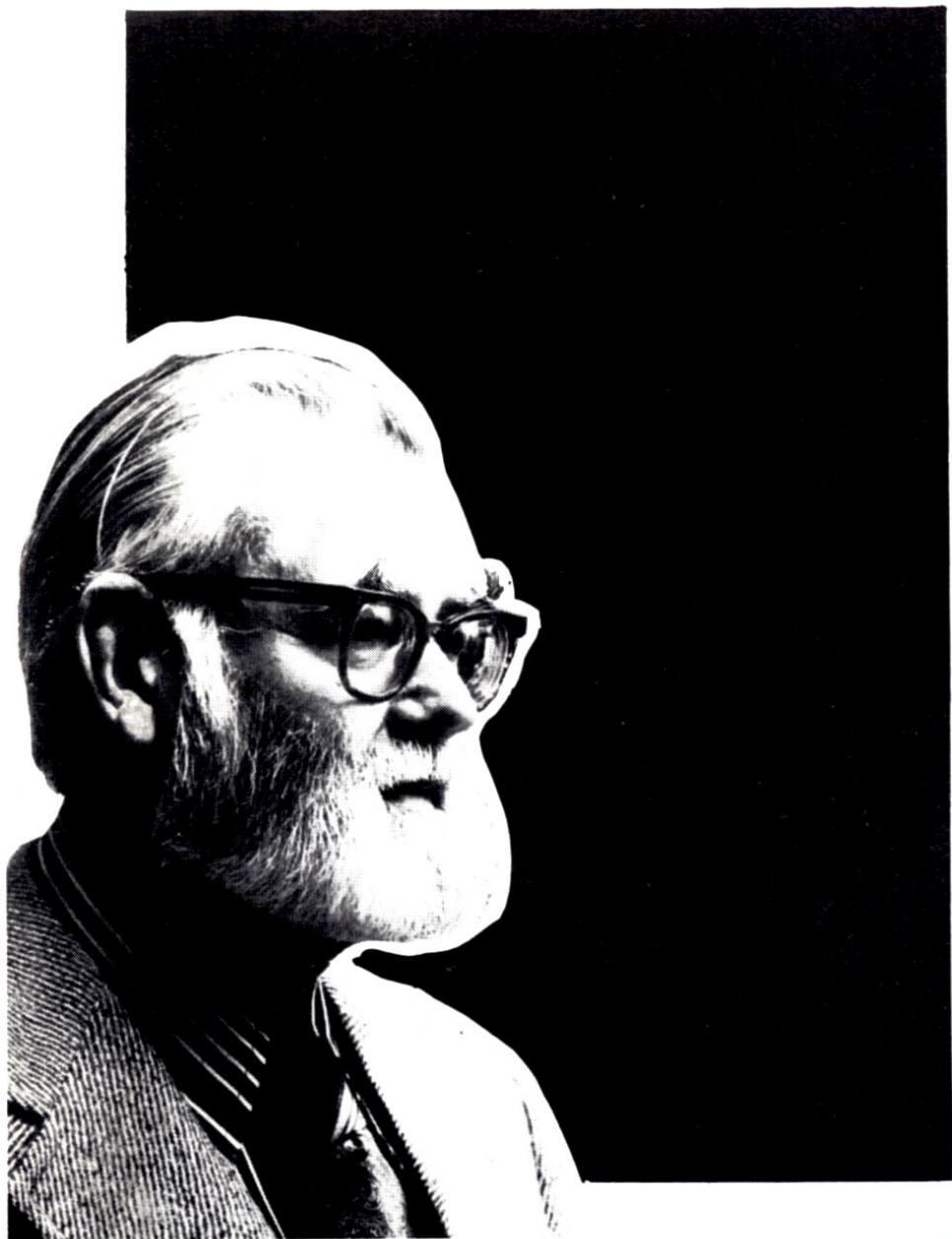
George Pal's WAR OF THE WORLDS is one of those perennial favorites of science-fiction and horror film fans. Little new can be said about it—its spectacle speaks for itself. It won the Academy Award for special effects in 1953. Critics almost unanimously praised the film. Penelope Houston in *Sight and Sound*, for instance: "No previous screen venture into science-fiction devised such ingeniously alarming objects as these swan-shaped machines with their menacing, gliding progress, the metallic ticking and hissing that accompanied...and the uncoiling, shaking movements of their heads."

WAR OF THE WORLDS. Prod: George Pal. Dir: Byron Haskin. Scr: Barre Lynden. Ph: George Barnes. Music: Leith Stevens. Editor: Everett Douglas. Art Dir: Hal Pereira, Albert Nozaki. Special Make-up: Charles Gemora. Sp. Efx. Dir: Gordon Jennings. Opticle Dir: Paul Lerpae. Planetary Art: Chesley Bonestell. Mixer: Gene Garvin. Release: Paramount, 1953. With: Gene Barry, Ann Robinson, Les Tremaine, Bob Cornwaite, Sandra Giglio, Vernon Rich, Paul Birch, Jack Kruschen, Lewis Martin, Paul Frees, Sir Cedric Hardwicke (Narr.) Voices: Hugh Beaumont. 85 mins.

FANTASCENE 2 will feature the second part of the WAR OF THE WORLDS Portfolio, with many more scenes directly from the film—The opening tour of the solar system; those incredible battle sequences, montages and the final fall of the invaders. Plus, behind-the-scenes pictures and illustrations from the 1st edition (1899) of H. G. Wells' novel showing the earliest visualizations of the Martian monsters and their war machines.







Former stage actor and set designer, decorated war hero, writer, film director, novelist... Ib J. Melchior occupies a unique place among science-fiction film creators. His work on a small group of films in the 60's is marked by an imagination and personal involvement not usually found in the low-budget film world...

"There are limits to everything human except for the indefatigable concept known as imagination. This at once has been man's strength and weakness, and through this one trait he has been able to conquer time and space..."

from the prologue of  
**JOURNEY TO THE 7TH PLANET**

The solving of seemingly impossible problems, the struggle for survival, man's ultimate strengths and weaknesses—these themes frequently appear in the works of screenwriter-director Ib Jorgen Melchior. He has projected his concerns, in the form of men undergoing supreme tests of their abilities onto alien and hostile worlds of space and time. His stories range from the sturdy adventures of *ROBINSON CRUSOE ON MARS* and *THE TIME TRAVELERS* to the bizarre, satirical prognostications of *DEATH RACE 2000* and "The Winner and New..." (a short story in which the election of a new president occurs on a game show).

In "The Premonition" episode of *THE OUTER LIMITS*, events in a hypothetical "time limbo" detail not only man's ability to surmount a mind-boggling scientific riddle, but hints at the possible nature of things like coincidences and premonitions. So goes the body of his science-fiction work—more aptly described as science-fantasy—adventures combined with contemplative undertones.

Melchior's screenplays usually pit a small group of men—usually definite "types" illustrating specific human qualities—against hostile environments where their ingenuity is put to definitive tests. Many of these "tests" take form in re-occurring motifs such as: the experiencing of frozen or chaotic states of time and matter; fighting super-human monsters; crossing impenetrable barriers and terrains, etc.

Melchior's films are excellent examples of what a creative film maker can accomplish in the face of minimal budgets and the Hollywood film making system. He has refined techniques of blending his concepts with the effects needed to give them concrete shape, exemplified best by the Melies-like enthusiasm he uses to carry out the "future-is-magic" idea behind *THE TIME TRAVELERS*.

An example of his special knack for putting complex relationships into startling, often ironic perspective occurs in *JOURNEY TO THE 7TH PLANET*. In one shot: upon an imaginary anvil in a non-existent blacksmith shop on Uranus an astronaut forges a weapon to destroy its very creator—the brain god of planet 7!

# THE FILM WORLDS OF IB J. MELCHIOR

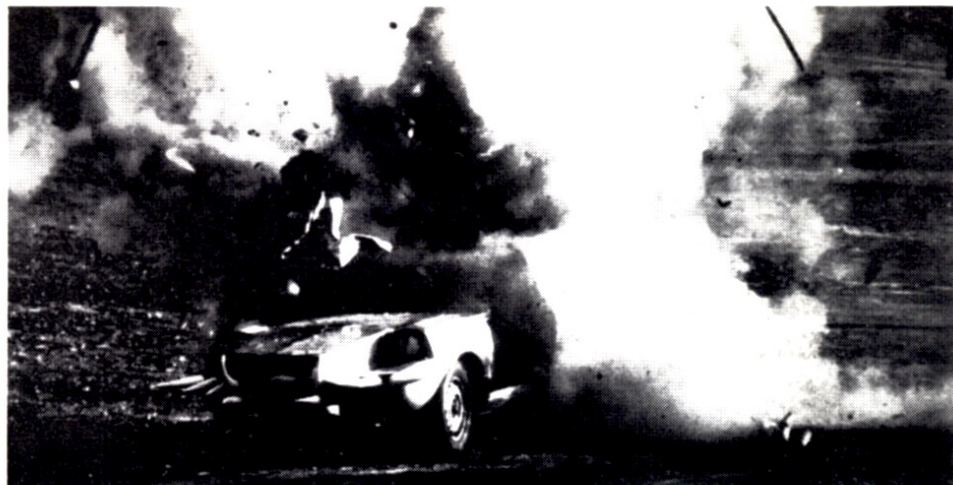
by Robert Skotak and Bob Scott



Both the films Melchior has directed and, primarily, those produced by others are faulted in a number of areas. Yet they, like many of the better "budget" films, often express a refreshingly personal and experimentalist approach to motion picture production.

Perhaps Melchior's stories and films are too much an amalgam for many—too action oriented for the intellectual viewer; too intellectual for the space opera fan.

Yet his work comprises a fascinating whole. Melchior is the only writer-director, with the exception of George Pal, to have made extensive use of outer space as a background for adventure and speculation. For this alone he deserves consideration in addition to his many fine and richly imaginative contributions to the world of science fiction, fantasy and horror films.



One of the racers is blown to bits in Roger Corman's *DEATH RACE 2000*, based on Melchior's story about the insanity of violence.

Ib Melchior was born Sept. 17, 1917 and educated in Denmark, majoring in literature and language. He graduated from the University of Copenhagen with the degree of Candidatus Philosophiae. Soon after he joined a British theatrical company head-quartering in Paris as an actor, and toured Europe with this troupe, becoming stage manager and co-director of the company. Just prior to the outbreak of World War II he came to the United States with the company to do a Broadway show.

Melchior volunteered his services to the U.S. Armed Forces, served in the O.S.S. for a while before serving 2 years as a military intelligence investigator. After the war he began his writing career during which he wrote short stories, articles, and novellettes for numerous national and European publications. He extended his creative activities into television and film, directing and/or writing over 500 TV shows and winning numerous awards for his documentary film work. He has also written a couple of legitimate plays for the stage including "Hour of Vengeance," a dramatization of the ancient Amlet legend that was the original source for "Hamlet." Below Melchior comments in answer to questions we directed to him about his work and interests:

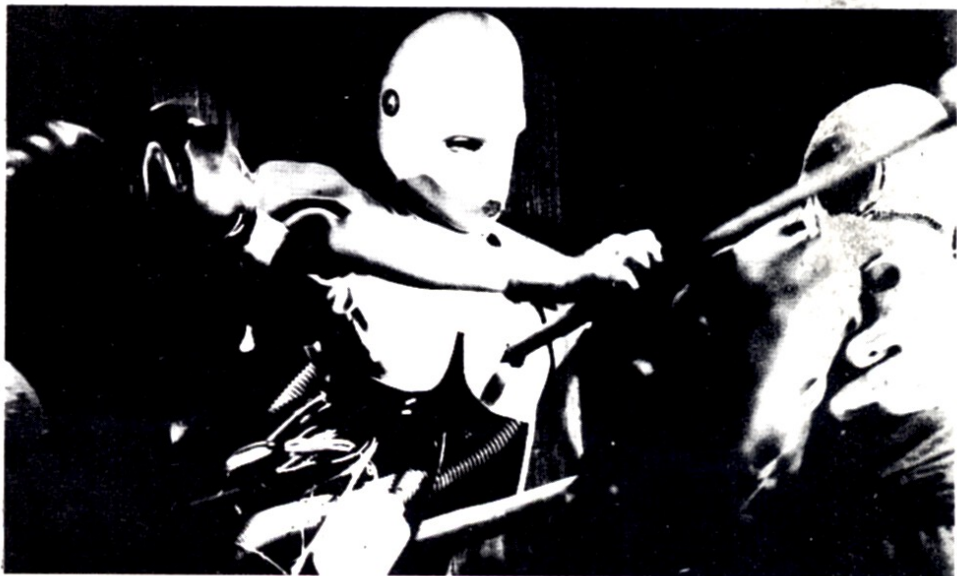
"After World War II I got into TV as a director, and when TV went largely from 'live' to film I went along—to Hollywood. Here I wrote scripts for a few TV shows, and discovered that I could not direct any motion pictures without being a member of the Director's Guild of America—and I could not become a member without directing a movie! Consequently my only chance was to persuade some producer to represent to the Guild that I was essential to his production and thereby make it possible for me to join the Guild. I did this by writing a script for a producer who had not been able to lick certain story problems in a science-fiction project, with the condition that if he liked what I did I would also direct the film. He did, and I did. The film was *THE ANGRY RED PLANET*.

As director of *ANGRY RED PLANET*, with a limited budget, I of necessity had to compromise in some areas of shooting. In order to employ the many effects we did, we had to cut the special effects budget and use imagination instead of dollars. I prefer it that way, as a matter of fact.

"Perhaps the best example of this factor was the film *THE TIME TRAVELERS* for which film David Hewitt and I developed a new concept in special effects—involving the principal actors directly and taking place in the studio on the set rather than in the laboratory.



*THE ANGRY RED PLANET*



"The maddened beasts fall upon the skewered Cyborg, slashing, hacking, hewing, mercilessly dismembering him—literally tearing the robot to pieces... until only his chest, his head and one arm remains pinned to the wall, trailing wires, springs, tubes, and mutilated coils, but still fighting." *THE TIME TRAVELERS*.

Note: Quotes appearing under captions are taken from Melchior's screenplays for the films pictured.



"JOURNEY TO THE 7TH PLANET as well as REPTILICUS were written by myself, then taken to Denmark by the American producer who filmed the scripts there. This producer, unfortunately, re-wrote the scripts and also directed the films himself with no prior experience. The original Sid Pink story [for JOURNEY...]—more of an undeveloped idea—had little to do with the script I wrote. Both films were later "fixed up" by AIP, as best possible, with me working as post-production director within the limitations of the existing films. The mole creature [seen only in studio publicity for JOURNEY...] was the original creature. It could not be used as photographed and substitution had to be made by us here.

"In the area of feature motion pictures and television writing my work has mostly been with science-fiction and adventure themes. Science-fiction—good science-fiction—is one of the most stimulating and provocative literary and cinematographic fields of inventive and imaginative endeavor.

"I feel that sci-fi films must be visually captivating and awe-inspiring to be successful. It is, however, important that the ideas and concepts used are plausible; taking a trend for example, and running with it into the future, such as DEATH RACE 2000, a story meant to bring into focus and condemn peoples' lust for violence. The original story of DEATH RACE 2000 was called simply "The Racer"... which I wrote after seeing a race driver killed at the Indianapolis 500. I realized that that is really what people came to see. It was a protest of "love of violence" for violence sake.

"Adventure-action films, of course, afford opportunities of effective pacing and excitement, but it is vital that the adventures happen to real people with whom identification is possible...

"For my approach to a story I like to bring a little something more to a script than a good story line and character developments. Perhaps ROBINSON CRUSOE ON MARS was the best example of this approach—man's indomitable spirit winning out over insurmountable odds.

"In writing I believe in doing a lot of pertinent research and making every concept plausible. For ROBINSON CRUSOE ON MARS every location was selected by myself, described and pin-pointed as to location in the shooting script, in order to achieve the "look" I had in mind. Unfortunately I could not direct the film myself as I was in production with another film at the time."

IbMelchior is now devoting most of his time to writing novels. His first, a World War II Intelligence adventure Order of Battle is now out in paperback (Warner Paperback Library). It was based on Melchior's real life experiences as a Military Intelligence Investigator attached to the Counter Intelligence Corps, for which work he was decorated by the U.S. Army as well as the King of Denmark. His latest novel is Sleeper Agent, also a Military Intelligence story, published by Harper and Row.

Mr. Melchior, when not writing, spends time adding to his immense collection of historical documents and military miniatures. The latter collection now contains close to 7,500 pieces, including a group of 5 inch lead soldiers used as "distant extras" in the 1938 MGM movie MARIE ANTOINETTE. In Melchior's words "...if one must have a war, what better place for it than on the living room wall—in miniature!"

Mr. Melchior is married to the designer Cleo Baldon and is the son of the late Wagnerian tenor, Lauritz Melchior.

## the angry red planet

'...her memory already is beginning to take on a quality of the unreality.'

THE ANGRY RED PLANET is one of the strangest low-budget "epics" ever made. Except for an occasional comment regarding its "clever trick photography", it has been long derided and has received little coverage. Yet it is a film of ingenious imagination and atmosphere, however cheaply it was produced.

Melchior's first feature film is a tight, dream-like melodrama about a visit to an incredibly hostile, alien world—Mars taken for a nightmare ride. Its creatures are straight out of Bosch and Ernst and bring to mind the outrageous assemblages of the surrealists...the kinds of creatures that might spring from some absurd fever dream. The Cinemagic scenes they appear in, though failing to achieve the graphic-cartoon imagery producer Norman Maurer hoped for, nonetheless rise to hallucinatory heights more common to the underground cinema than to commercial entertainment.

Melchior puts it all in perspective through proper motivation in his screen play: A woman scientist, Dr. Iris Ryan (Nora Hayden) is in a state of shock upon her return to earth from Mars in a tragedy-struck experimental rocket. Doctors use sodium penothol to jar her memory of the journey's events since she has experienced things so terrifying on Mars that she now suffers from trauma-induced amnesia. They do this even though aware that the drug will probably distort her recollections.

The story she tells is of their struggle for survival on a planet where humankind is little more than a troublesome parasite. The story's conclusion brings a warning from a martian utopia pointing an angry finger at man's spreading violence and petty morality...a kind of outer space "Yankee Go Home!"

Melchior's actual script (originally titled Invasion of Mars) is intricately detailed: every shot is precisely described, from specific technical information (space-orbital procedures to the clothing worn by all of the characters) down to the nuances of each camera set-up, use of color, movement, etc. The mood of every sequence is also vividly described and insisted upon. Even transitional shots are not quickly dismissed: the "mood" of a simple insert shot, for instance: "The Universe. In all its grandeur and splendor, it stretches into infinity." Among other details: a dust-devil that springs up for an instant when the giant ameoba comes up on shore; the presence of scattered reptilian bones inside the monster plant's "mouth"; a tiny airship that moves past the martian skyscrapers; asides like, "We'd better close the port guards. No use getting the view plates scratched up by meteor dust" etc.—all of which appear, though hardly noticeable, in the final film. Little new that is not in the script is in the film. Melchior, in directing the film, made best use of his limited funds by following his script like clockwork, having solved many time-consuming production problems on paper before filming began.

Through ingenious plotting his story, in "collaboration" with co-producer Sid Pink, provokes simple mysteries which plague the space travelers to the film's diminutive finale. Though critically hampered by a no more than competent cast, and though his script is too often laced with the "cute" dialogue of the 50's which appears trite now Melchior succeeds remarkably well in establishing psychological tensions and creating a "state of mind" perfectly suited to his premise. He also provides highly novel adventures for his trapped space men. His story shifts economically and smoothly from scenes of overt physical action as they fight martian monsters to scenes of personal stress and fear as the crew sweats it out in the claustrophobic space ship awaiting the martians' next move.

The life-ecology on Mars is paranoia-producing. Everything is out of earthly proportion, grown gigantic in Mars' weaker gravity. As if under "some super-intelligent community mind-control, similar to the mysterious power that keeps a colony of ants functioning in perfect unity" the Martian beasts move as one to expurgate the earthling intruders. It is from this concept that a sense of the paranoid stems (even the faces of the monsters are frozen in archetypal expressions of hatred). This feeling of a world "closing in" is played up by the grim seriousness of Melchior's situations...a feeling that culminates in the film's eeriest moment as Iris suddenly realizes she is being scrutinized by a tri-optic, coldly insectile Martian intelligence.

Adding further to the persistent psychological undertones is the threatening sensuality of the Mars horrors—as described in Melchior's screenplay: "Huge, vine-covered leaves hugging the earth, half-opened, glisten moistly in the faint light under the trees...the leaves open up wide to receive Iris—quivering moistly in anticipation..." Numerous aspects of producer Norman Maurer's production designs (see page 34) bear out this quality.

The Martian landscapes are no more to be taken for literal reality than the visions of a drug experience. They are seen refracted through Iris' eyes—the heated terrains of pinnacles and craters; the tangled mesh of forest; the glassy, dead marine-scapes—all are genuine images of the "inner eye". It's unfortunate that the mood of many of these scenes is broken by the annoying wise cracks of the Brooklynese communications man.

Unable to rely on standard split-screens and traveling mattes to create an alien world Melchior made good use of Maurer's simple but striking full-sized mock-ups and monsters along with rear-projected backgrounds and the bizarre, Cinemagic re-processed art work of Alex Toth. The more "far-out" effects such as those on the Martian lake or the ameoba "ingesting" one of the space men—offset an array of other effects that completely fail (i.e. the cartooned meteor in space, stilted scenes of the batratspidercrab puppet and, worst of all, the "rolling" eye of the ameoba).

All in all THE ANGRY RED PLANET is not, by far, a bad film, especially considering the circumstances under which it was made and what others with less imagination would've done with the same ideas. For viewers who have an awareness of the realities of the Hollywood film making system and/or those who more readily like to get "under the skin" of a film THE ANGRY RED PLANET, in spite of its faults, provides many nice moments of cinematic ingenuity and eerie wonders.





"...the huge, dark eyes go milky-opaque... The creature howls a marrow-freezing shriek—like the demoniacal death cry of a gigantic rat."



"Outside, towering over the Martian vegetation stands a gigantic, looming figure... nearly a hundred feet tall." The creature was in actuality a 3½ foot tall costume worn by a dwarf!



"The gargantuan creature is slowly walking on—right over Tom and Iris."



Night falls on THE ANGRY RED PLANET. See page 35 for behind-the-scenes look at this mini-epic.

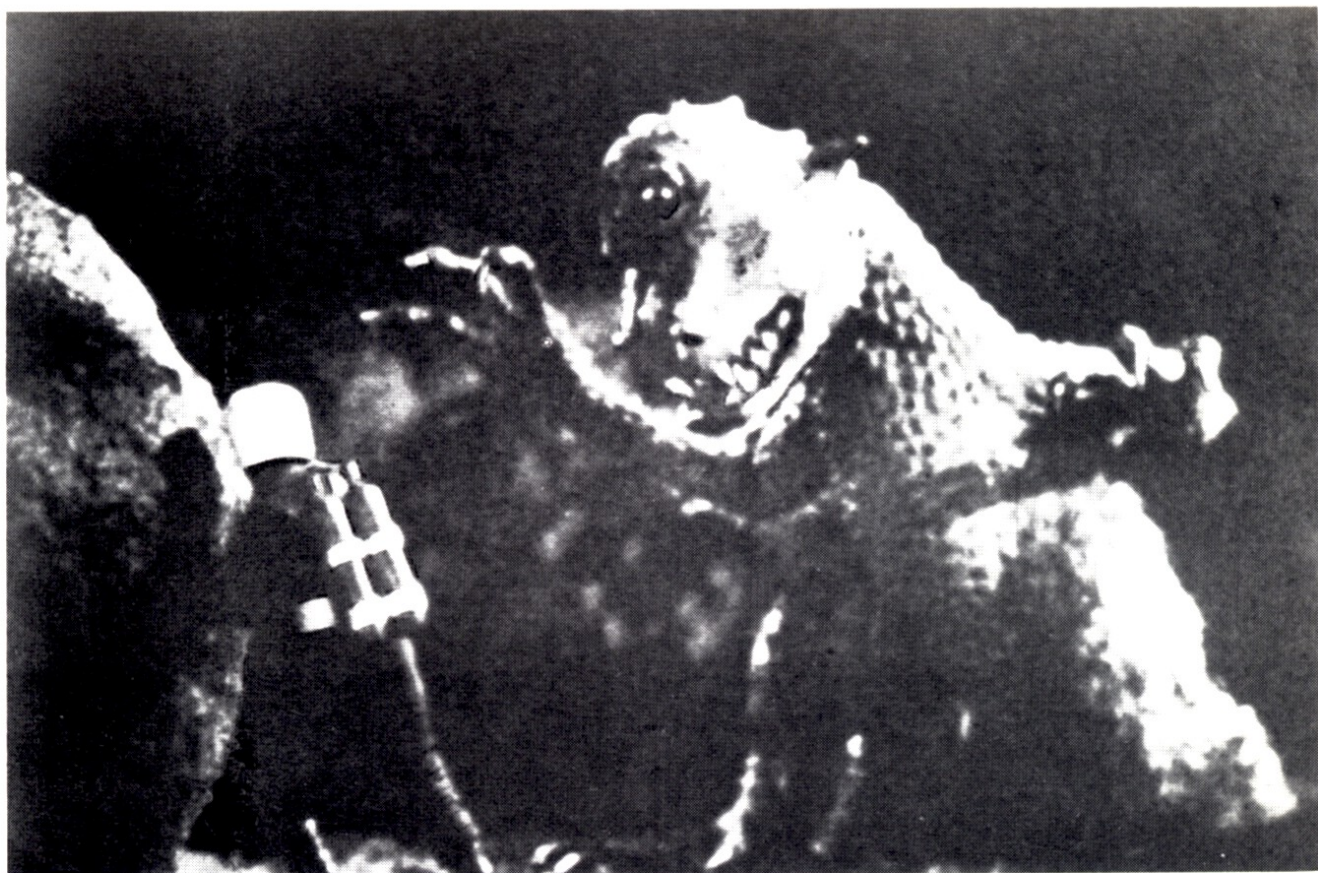


"The nuclei revolve in agitation... the sand around the creature swirls in furiously whirling 'sand devils'. The thing seems to shudder... it oozes over the abandoned boat, dwarfing it and completely enveloping it."



"Sam is torn from his grip and immediately engulfed in the slimy, translucent mass."







## *journey to the 7th planet*

"We all know that nothing in this place is real."

Melchior's script for *JOURNEY TO THE 7TH PLANET* develops the idea of a massive power that controls matter and energy on the distant planet Uranus. An international crew of 5 astronauts land on the planet in the year 2001 to investigate the signals of this force only to be overcome by the mental powers of the thing—a huge brain-like creature that lurks beneath the surface of Uranus. They are subjected to beautiful and horrifying hallucinations projected out of the very substance of their memories. They revisit places from their childhood that magically appear, and fight monsters representing their own subconscious fears. Finally they face and destroy the creature that has taken command of their thoughts.

Sid Pink's production of the film fell far short of its ideas. Lacking unity in its effects, even within the framework of a low-budget film, and hampered by awkward pacing and acting the film nonetheless holds interest due to its intriguing premise.

Within the commercial form Melchior retells the mythic story of the fall from Paradise into spiritual death. The men find a Garden of Eden-like forest and "several Eves" in the form of beautiful women from their past who tempt them into giving up their mission of exploration. Meanwhile their minds are being studied by the dark god of planet 7 who examines and uses their weaknesses, like an other world Devil, against them. They quickly decline in morale, falling prey to what they know is in actuality just a material illusion. They finally realize their failings and cross into the cold world of Uranus—the *real* Uranus that lies beyond an invisible barrier the alien power has constructed around their paradise—and destroy their tormentor.

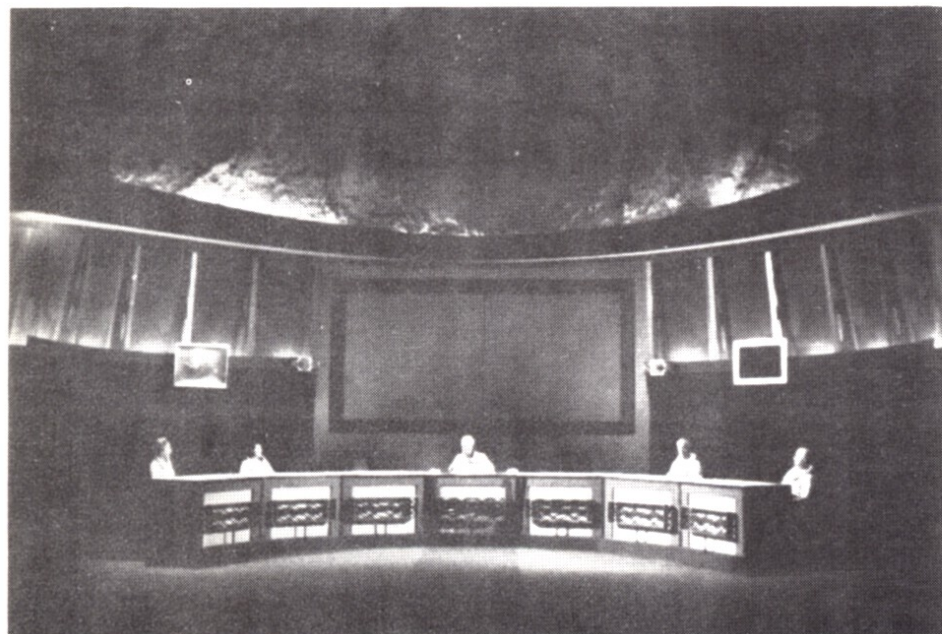
Described in the original script is a snake-like creature that further added to the references to myth: "It is coiled around the rocks, a huge, fearful serpent-like creature with a hideous head fully three feet across. There is one large eye in the center, two stubby deformed horns and a double set of curved, scimitar-like mandible fangs... The body is covered with slimy, sickly grey-green scales... the reptilian slit pupil of the eye expands and contracts rhythmically... [It] seems to be devouring time and space itself." This creature appears in the film in the altered form of a giant rodent monster that terrorizes the men in an underground cave of Uranus.

Many extraordinary touches abound in the script which survive in Sid Pink's production: an astronaut plucks an apple from a tree that but a moment before was not there; bushes are pulled from the ground revealing no roots; Eric, the captain of the ship, (Carl Ottosen) relates memories of his childhood village, an old-fashioned windmill and the two giant birch trees that surrounded it. These are magically recreated behind him as he talks, sitting by a campfire in an imaginary forest 500 million miles from Earth!

A few other scenes in the film capture the strange charm of the screenplay in its juxtaposition of the quaint with cosmic horror and contrast of lush Earthly terrains



PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES



Opposite top: "Karl remains standing, trance-like, watching the approaching creature... its single baleful eye is almost hypnotic." Opposite bottom: Barry Sullivan and Norma Bengell in Mario Bava's 1965 production *PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES*. Above: Varno speaks: "Earth... our planet, our home is now just a burned-out, sterile slag in space... we must go to the stars."

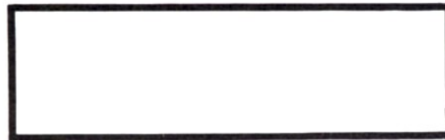




## PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES

against eerie alien landscapes. This feeling is summed up in a scene wherein Ingrid (Ann Smyrner) is weaving by cozy lantern light in an old cottage while she softly tells Eric of "the lone being that is everywhere in thought".

In the end the over use of out-of-focus, zoom conscious photography, set and special effect limitations etc. take their toll on the film. Surviving is a fine concept fleshed out with a short but excellent animated monster sequence and a few moments of color and atmosphere aided by an effective musical score. Though the Melchior-Pink collaboration deserves better it still ranks as a memorably imaginative space film. Variety, in a mixed review, commented: "Among the capable physical contributions to a film highly dependent for dramatic interests upon abstracts, miniatures, opticals and special effects are those of montage director Ib Melchior."



## *reptilicus*

**"For eons it must have been frozen—in suspended animation...and now it's alive!"**

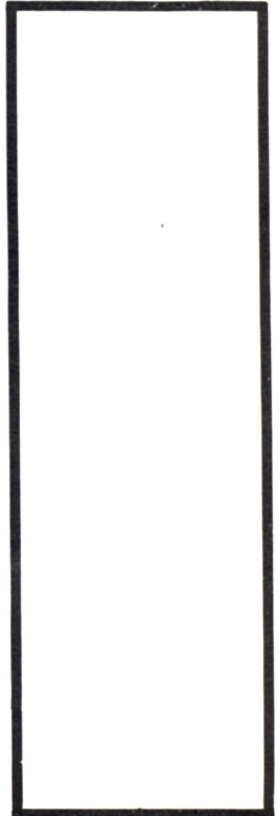
Little can be salvaged of REPTILICUS to comment upon. Devastated by poor and (worse) unimaginative special effects and handicapped by unconvincing actors (the same cast leads as JOURNEY TO THE 7TH PLANET) all potential is lost for anything more than a typical "monster-on-the-loose" adventure.

The beautiful city of Copenhagen is shown in several charming scenes early in the film, but the contrasting tragedy of its impending doom is never realized. Also remaining undeveloped are the characters who assume a greater role than usual for this type of film.

Conceptually the Reptilicus creature is a true juggernaut—a complete, self-regenerating, invincible war machine. On paper Melchior's script, based on Sid Pink's story, is a lively tactical war adventure of men against this one-monster-army—a creature that could believably destroy all life on Earth. The details in the script of the war preparations, mapping, tactical planning etc. are all elaborate and ambitious.

The film is a disaster. No effort appears to have been made to at least photograph the obvious miniatures from realistic angles, much less vary the tiresome flopping

Below: Behind-the-scenes on THE TIME TRAVELERS. Ib Melchior (far right) awaits cameramen William Zsigmond (holding cup) and Laszlo Kovacs (behind camera) as they prepare for the next shot.





of the atrocious Reptilicus puppet on its strings. All in all the film does little with its raw materials and only served to give puppets a bad name. As the film's producer and director Pink takes the blame for its outcome. At least his production of JOURNEY TO THE 7TH PLANET showed some imagination ... not so REPTILICUS.

## the time travelers

**"Time is itself an anachronism. We've compounded it by appearing here."**

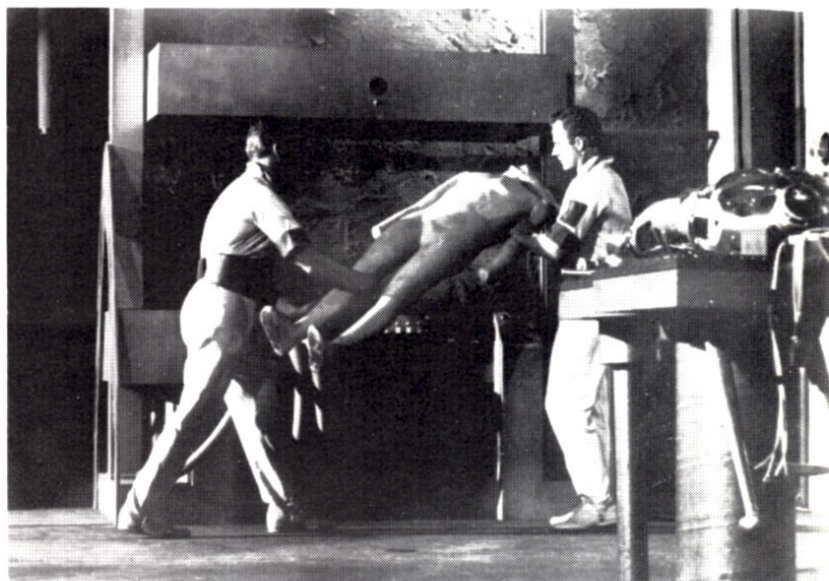
The old idea that to a primitive caveman our modern technology would appear to be magical is carried out to its literal extreme in Melchior's 1964 film, *THE TIME TRAVELERS*. The film, another in the *WORLD WITHOUT END* vein, (a post-atomic war culture survives underground) makes use of numerous special effects, many of which are actually elaborate adaptations of magic tricks. In spite of its grim ending, *THE TIME TRAVELERS* is basically a good entertainment film aiming for excitement, visual interest and physical action.

Beginning with a breathtaking view of the Andromeda galaxy and complimented by the simple, but very atmospheric score by Richard LaSalle, the film moves right into a prosaic research laboratory that soon becomes a gateway to another world. Again the situation is that of a small group of people isolated in space and time. Winding up on the other side of an accidental Time Window 107 years into a devastated future Earth, the 4 time travelers, separated from the normal flow of events, struggle to re-establish order amidst chaos.

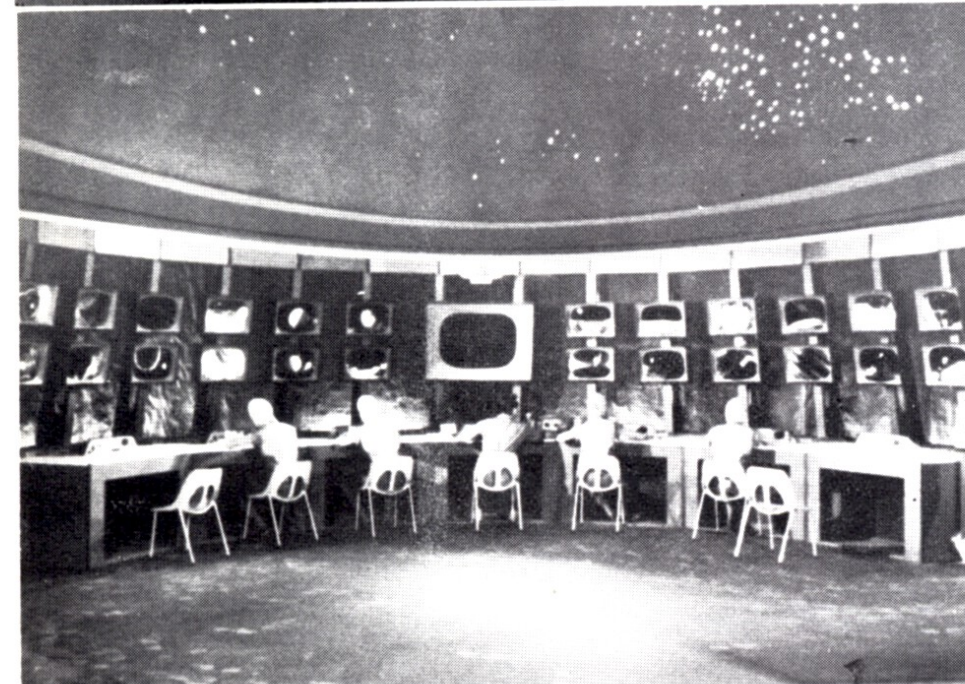
Below: "It's like a nightmare of unending silence..." The four space travelers in *THE ANGRY RED PLANET* (played by Nora Hayden, Les Tremaine, Jack Kruschen, and the late Gerald Mohr) paddle across the lake terrain—a scene altered in the final film.



THE TIME TRAVELERS







Top: Living Dead spacemen prowl the foggy terrain of Aura. Middle: Paul Mantee as Lt. Christopher Drake crawls from the wreckage of his space capsule and steps into a modernized version of Daniel Defoe's famous epic of survival "Robinson Crusoe." Bottom: The TV Monitor-Survey Room in *THE TIME TRAVELERS*—one of the numerous non-optically created special effects designed for the film.

The world Melchior has imagined resembles a labyrinthian cave wherein science and the explorations of other worlds barely, yet bravely survives. A great deal of the film shifts, often uneasily, between seriousness and the humorous wonders of the future. Long sequences focus on the activities in a vast Android Factory where the robot creatures are being assembled. The resulting effects-tricks are amusing and generally achieve the intended effect of amazement. The removal and replacement of an android's head and the seemingly magical blossoming of an orange tree and other scenes work well. A few effects such as the "endless glass of water" scene and the Matter Transfer Chamber are far too stagey and draw attention to their source. The time screen itself, the Council Chamber and TV Survey Room perspective shots, the slow rising of the starship on its pad and the iris-like opening up of a cave wall, however, are ingenious and belie the low budget origin of the film (under \$250,000).

The science of the future as depicted is a logical extension of present day science. After 107 years the people still use hand tools and perform physical tasks while having made great strides in simple, practical inventions—the prognostications are not so far out as to be unbelievable.

The performances, with the exception of a few miscast minor roles are good, with Philip Carey and Dennis Patrick standing out. Patrick is particularly effective as the standard council villain. The late Preston Foster, in his first fantasy role since the 1931 film *DR. X*, sports a Morbius-like beard and manner. His counterpart in the future is the kind council leader Varno—well-played by character actor John Hoyt. But over-all, the effects dominate the production and set the tone of the film.

Melchior establishes himself as a solid, action oriented director, keeping everything moving evenly—effects, physical adventure and dramatic interludes. His best work takes place near the end of the film as atomic scarred mutants lay siege to the underground fortress, sweeping viciously through its inhabitants. This sequence, as photographed by Laslo Kovacs and William Zsigmond, two of Hollywood's top cameramen, is bloody, frenzied and violent with mutants spearing and hacking the androids apart, while humans slash into the marauding creatures with axes, clubs, broken bottles and guns. Compounding the excitement are the final preparations under stress of the attack to return through a hastily rebuilt time portal. Simultaneously, the huge starship is blown up on its pad by the mutants. The time travelers return to the past too soon and find the world frozen in time, existing on a slower time scale—an idea Melchior explores at greater length in the *OUTER LIMITS* episode, "The Premonition." The few remaining survivors of the human race catch one brief glimpse of a hopeful far future paradise before they are caught in an endlessly repeating, inescapable time cycle.

Richard Davis in *Films and Filming* commented: "Through sheer audacity the whole bag of tricks works...lb Melchior who directed it has done a good, well-paced job. Welcome dashes of humor... the special effects are imaginative and clever... I liked too the uncompromisingly tough ending. In fact I like *THE TIME TRAVELERS*." The Los Angeles Herald-Examiner pretty well summed up the film: "[Melchior] has managed to dress events in such a bright, entertaining package that the result is entertainment."



# robinson crusoe on mars

"Mayday! Mayday! Crash on Mars inevitable! Reaching gravity and atmosphere entry for ejection of emergency capsules..."

Melchior's script for ROBINSON CRUSOE ON MARS is the basis of a film that is probably the best known and highest regarded, critically speaking, of all his screen collaborations. It is a big-budget film, cast clearly in a big picture, commercial mold and features all the fine dressings afforded by a less restrictive budget and shooting schedule.

His story focuses in on the objective story of one man's struggle for survival on a hostile world. The film is fascinating, though in a way lacking in the kind of inspired visual inventiveness displayed in Melchior's low-budget films. Director Bryon Haskin (Demon with a Glass Hand), for instance, replaced Melchior's squat, tank-like aliens with circa 1950 space-suited men decorated with lightning bolts! Aside from lapses like this, however, Haskin directed his actors and the numerous excellent special effects exceptionally well.

Melchior's version of the script, before editing, is a longer, more action-packed narrative—more of an extraterrestrial epic than the film version. Perhaps the script, filled with prismatic caverns of ice, battles against giant ant lions and hordes of underground insects, went beyond the budget capabilities of the studio's effects department as well as their "scientifically accurate" orientation.

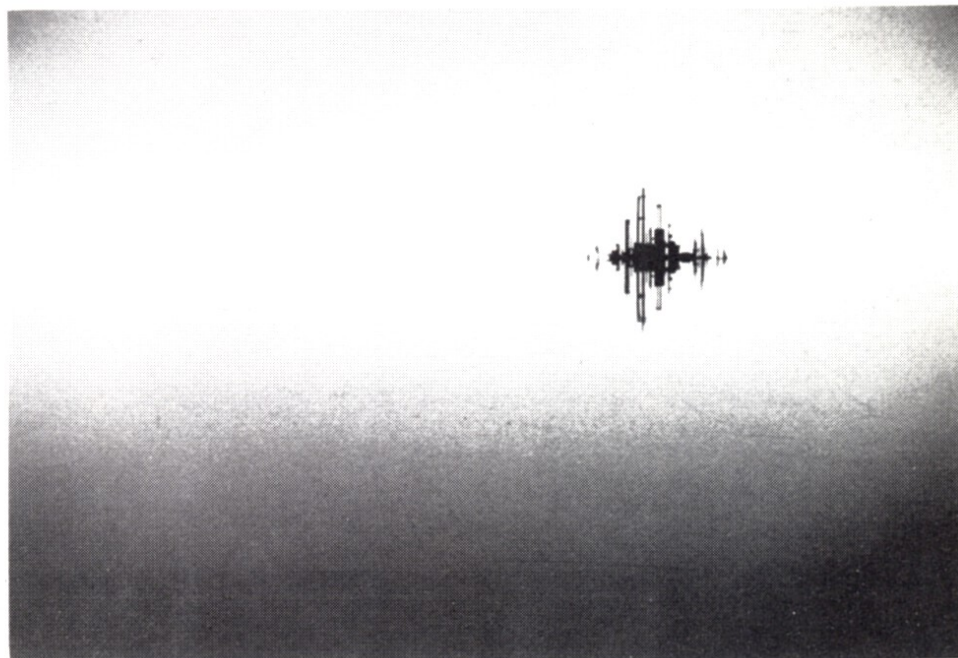
Several deleted monster sequences were abstractions of the powerful forces of nature that the lone astronaut must face, and were well conceived to fit the theme of the story. One of these "creatures" is an ultimate image of nature at its most fearful level—an almost living, screaming whirlwind existing in a Dali-like, surreal valley of fantastically sculptured rocks.

Despite these alterations the film closely follows Melchior's plot and remains rooted to his idea of transforming an acknowledged literary classic to an altogether different time and media without losing its vital message and scope.

Several long shots of the lone, black-clad Mantee silhouetted against the red-orange Martian sky are strikingly melancholy and yet exhilarating—an unusual quality in the generally pessimistic world of science-fiction films: "He stops... and looks solemnly out upon the Martian landscape... the alien land lies before him in all its weirdly wondrous beauty; the distant sun is setting in a riot of deep red and purple colors; the dark shadows are long on the sand... He looks up into the sky, then slowly bows his head..."

ROBINSON CRUSOE ON MARS emerges as a positive re-affirmation of man's faith in his potentials and in the powers he attunes himself to in order to survive in a universe he can not ever completely comprehend. It is simple adventure and also a reflection on the realities of existing in and of itself. The story of one man's survival on a hellish planet takes on a mythic quality—the eternal man enduring and surviving.

Most critics received the film well. The Los Angeles Times commented: "By turning Defoe's ship-wrecked sailor into a stranded astronaut science writer lb Melchior brings to the conquest of space a universal and timeless appeal... [It] endows space exploration with the idea of individual achievement which was the missing element in the flights of Gagarin and Glenn. ROBINSON CRUSOE ON MARS is



Above top: "Her mind might snap if we force her to remember the horror she has so carefully obliterated from her conscious level." "On the psychological level monsters allude to the base powers which constitute the deepest strata of spiritual geology; seething as in a volcano until they erupt in the shape of some monstrous apparition." J.E. Cirlot. Above: "The water stretches as far as the eye can see; it is empty and still with hardly a ripple... Rising over the horizon is a forrest of needle-pointed spires—like giant pins in a pin cushion."



that true rarity, a multiple-run masterpiece ... a work of art." Ray Pickard in his *Companion to the Movies* called the film "vastly superior to others far better known of its kind", while *Variety* labeled it "A tribute to the creative and cinematic ingenuity of all who toiled on it."

## planet of the vampires

"Swimming serenely against the fabulous beauty of the cosmos is an unfamiliar planet; it nestles in space like a beautiful opal orb on a jeweler's velvet." This is *Aura*... planet of nameless horrors, perpetual fog and darkness—the Planet of the Vampires!

Ib Melchior's script *The Outlaw Planet* was translated to the screen in an engrossing manner by Mario Bava. The film is dark, haunted, expressionistic in its use of diffused, shadowy lighting, sculptured props, rolling fog, endless mist and finely

turned grotesqueries. It is to the credit of Bava's ingenuity and imagination that he retains so much of the phantasmogoria that is Melchior's original treatment, though the original is much tighter in concept and development.

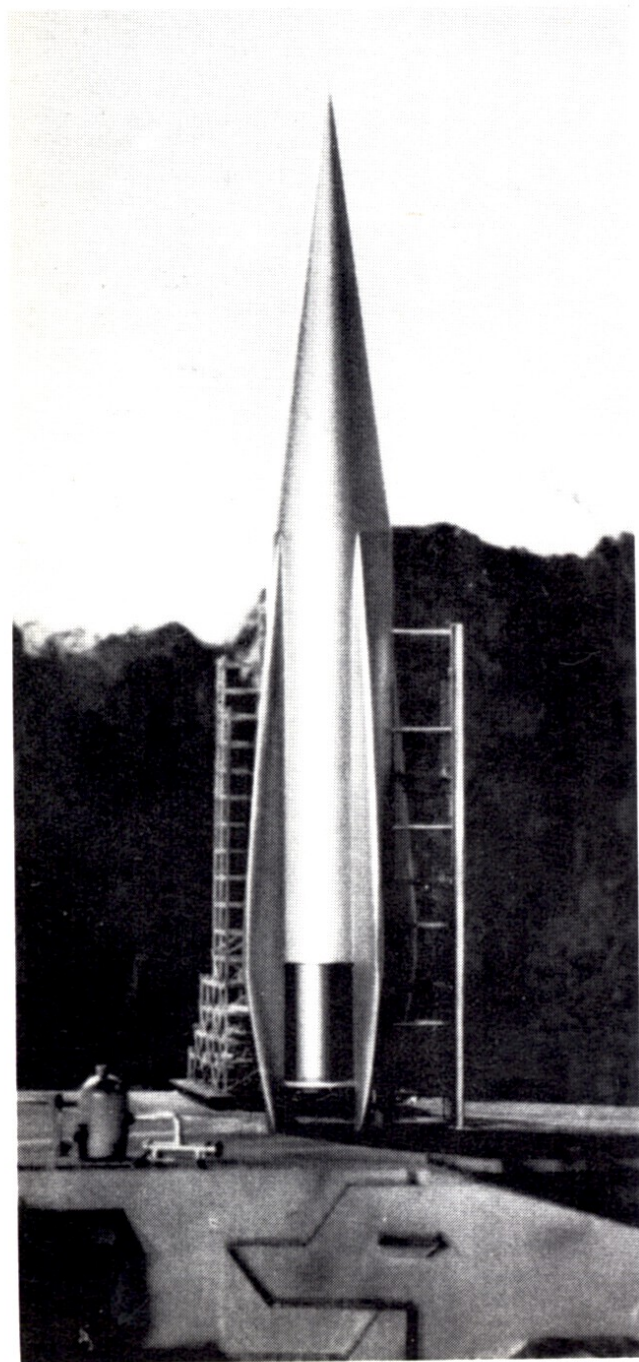
A crew of 12 men and women fight against ghostly, bodiless entities capable of luring men to their deaths and then re-animating the dead bodies. Like true spirits, their existence is just guessed about at first and only appear visible out of the corner of the eye. Direct communication is impossible since they exist on a totally different vibratory plane. Desperate to escape their stygian, star wandering planet, the invisible beings are determined to take over the entire crew and voyage in the space ship to a better world.

Melchior's characters are strong, seasoned space travelers. Captain Markary (played by Barry Sullivan) is a man who will not give up, who refuses to let his crew fall prey to the Aurans. An iron-willed man, he is an effective symbol of the powers of light against those of the enveloping darkness. His adversary is the planet itself, the elements of which form an atmosphere of doom. The Aurans (in both the film and

script) assumes a character of its own—a kind of Nth "presence" over all that blurs the lines of definition between the familiar and the unreal. It accentuates the gnawing fear of the enclosing darkness and the disquieting effect the unknown can have upon rational men.

The special effects are abundant and well handled. Especially fine are the atmospheric miniatures and split screen shots showing the abstract, pulsating machinery of a vast alien starship. Unfortunately some of the effects betray the size of the miniatures in their lack of depth of field—primarily in scenes of the spaceship flying in space with stars blurred out in the background. Likewise, when the script calls for distant *Aura* to be shrouded in fog, Bava merely throws the whole image of the planet out of focus in an attempt to achieve this impression. The impact of many scenes is also hurt by a poor dubbing job for the American version, although none of the performances are really outstanding anyway.

Louis Heyward edited the script down (probably for budgetary reasons) while adding a few genuinely good visual touches





—(the giant alien skeletons, descriptions of the unique landing gear and air lock systems). Yet in the process, he destroyed the script's unity by over-complicating the choreography of plot incidents, and eliminating many of Melchior's best touches. One cut occurs as Markary and crew member Tiona discover a crystal-encased 3-D image while rummaging through the ancient wreckage of an alien starship. The image discovered is of the unearthly wife and child of one of the starship's former occupants (a personal snapshot remembrance!)—one of the few moments in filmed science-fiction that the traditional "bug-eyed monster" is given any sympathetic character or background.

The final showdown on Aura is also altered. Melchior's treatment features an eerie battle between the spacemen and not only the reanimated bodies of the dead, but an additional horde of weird, other-world monstrosities who, like the Galiot's crew, have met death over the eons at the hand of Aurans. Batteries of the powerful search lights encircle the base of the ship and are used to fend off the creatures that lurch about in the foggy blackness beyond the edge of visibility. When the lights

fail—again representing the last bastion of rational order—the ship is besieged by every imaginable nightmare from out of the abyss of space. In other sequences, however, Bava sticks close to Melchior's screenplay and mood.

PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES is one of Bava's most impressive films and is based on one of Melchior's most fantastic scripts: their styles perfectly compliment each other. The collaboration deserves recognition as a richly textured, exciting fantasy about first contact with life on another world.

## death race 2000

"... and the most popular spectator sports of the latter half of the 20th Century were such mildly exciting pursuits as boxing and wrestling. Of course the spectators enjoyed seeing the combatants trying

to maim each other, and there was always the chance of the hoped-for fatal accident..."

Ib Melchior's story, "The Racer" is a pointed indictment of man's obsession with violence. It epitomizes Melchior's approach to speculation about the future in fiction—taking what is now and leading it along to an outrageous conclusion, when the "little" problems of today become an absurd reality tomorrow.

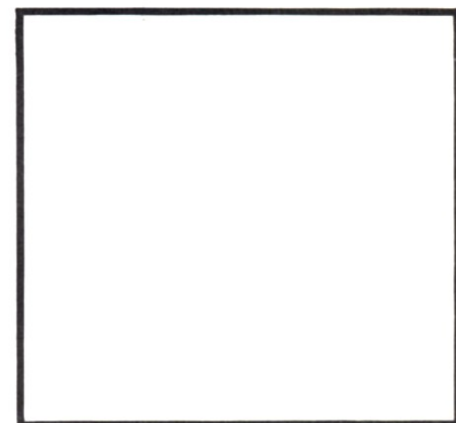
In "The Racer", hit and run racing is the legal sport of the day as conducted in the annual Transcontinental Road Race:

"She stood rooted to the spot in the middle of the street holding the child in her arms. In the glaring headlights her face was white, her eyes terrible, burning, dark... Willie did not let up. The car hurtled down upon the lone figure..."

Roger Corman produced the film DEATH RACE 2000 based on the story. Paul Bartel is the idiosyncratic—and perfect—director who faithfully carries out this bizarre tale.

The film is a fast-paced comic book of humor and horror, none of it pointless. It is violent to be sure: decapitations; spearings; crashes, etc. Bartel doesn't dwell on these moments. They flash by with just enough impact to disturb our consciences in the midst of what laughter and enjoyment there is. By controlling the use of violence, Bartel and Corman avoid rendering a hypocritical treatment of Melchior's theme. Implied is that there is no rationalizing of man's love of violence, but that it is waging more and more out of control.

DEATH RACE 2000 is far from being a perfect film. It frequently shows its low-budget by attempting to emulate the external qualities of a high-budget picture, its treatment is often too light and at least one of its characters, Nero the Hero, seems to have stepped right out of an old, AIP "beach party" film. On the other hand, considering its serious aspects, it does avoid pretension and provide entertainment through the performances of its likeable cast and slam-bang sequences.



Opposite left: The photon-drive rocket from THE TIME TRAVELERS. Opposite right top: Alex Toth's paintings and drawings for THE ANGRY RED PLANET convey a strong impression of the outre. "There is a stillness and immobility outside, as if the Martian countryside were frozen in menacing watchfulness." Opposite right bottom: "The alien vegetation is incredibly abundant and strangely unfamiliar; long tufts like tangled Spanish moss hang from grotesquely distorted tree limbs; fungi, lichen and deformed ferns teem; twisted vines and creepers snake everywhere among the gnarled branches." Left top: Re-processed images in THE ANGRY RED PLANET attempted to combine painted backdrops, puppets, miniatures, drawings and rear-projected effects into an organic whole. Below left: Rare view of the frozen landscape of Uranus in the Danish-produced JOURNEY TO THE 7TH PLANET.



## SCIENCE FICTION FILMOGRAPHY

"Water Tank Rescue". Scr: Melchior. **Men Into Space** TV series. 1959. Series character Col. McCauley devises a unique method of saving a fellow astronaut stranded on the Moon. with William Lundigan.

"Voice of Infinity". Scr: Melchior. **Men Into Space**. 1959. A space station spinning out of control puts "electronic, near-miraculous scientific equipment" and man's abilities to an ultimate test. McCauley finds within himself a strength that transcends the equipment's readings and enables him to cope with the crisis. with: William Lundigan.

**The Angry Red Planet**. Scr: Melchior-Sid Pink. Dir: Melchior. Color. 1960. AIP release. Prod: Norman Maurer, Pink. Ph: Stanley Cortez. Mus: Paul Dunlap. with Les Tremaine, Nora Hayden, Gerald Mohr, Jack Kruschen, J. Edward McKinley. 83 mins.

**Journey to the 7th Planet**. Scr./Post-prod. Dir: Melchior. Color. 1962. AIP release. Prod-Dir: Sid Pink. Ph: Aage Wiltrup. with John Agar, Carl Ottosen, Ann Smyrner, Mimi Heinrich, Greta Thyssen. 81 mins.

**Reptilicus**. Scr: Melchior. Color. 1962. AIP release. Prod-Dir: Sid Pink. Ph: Aage Wiltrup. with Carl Ottosen, Ann Smyrner, Mimi Heinrich. 82 mins.

**The Time Travelers**. Scr-Dir: Melchior. Color. 1964. AIP release. Sp. Efx: Melchior-David Hewitt. Ph: William Zsigmond. Mus: Richard LaSalle. with Preston Foster, John Hoyt, Phillip Carey, Merry Anders, Dennis Patrick, Forrest Ackerman. 82 mins.

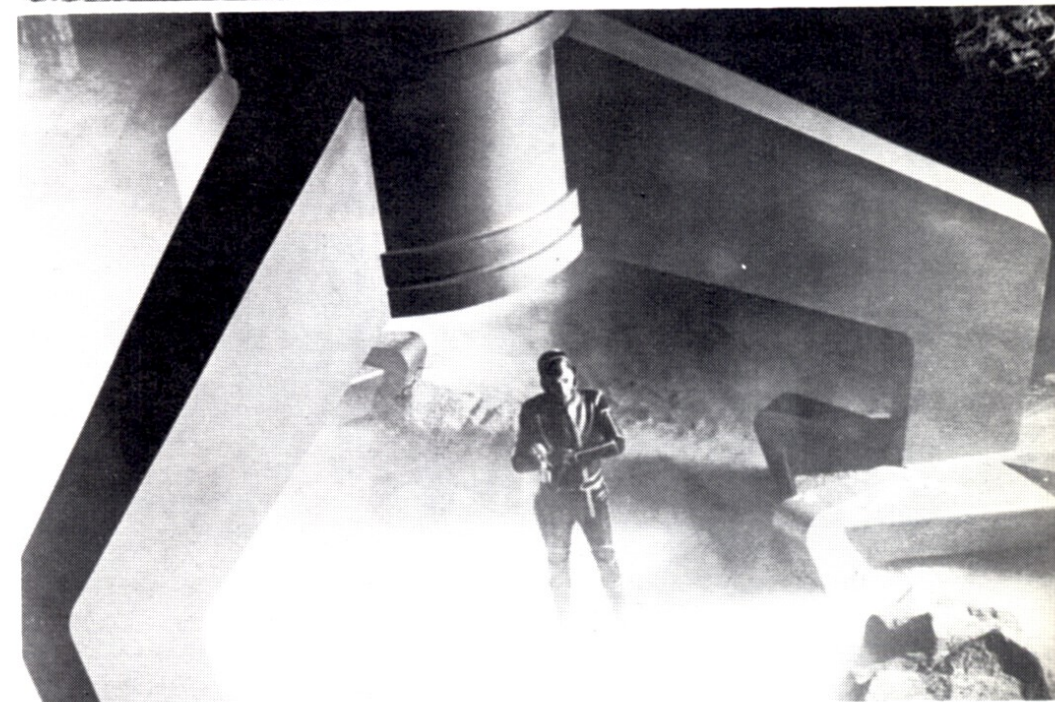
"The Premonition". Scr: Melchior. **Outer Limits** TV series. 1964. A new test plane projects a pilot and his wife into a state of frozen time. Seeing that the world is slowly "catching up" to them, they devise a method of re-uniting themselves with the normal time-flow, even as multiple complications compound their efforts. with Dewey Martin.

**Robinson Crusoe on Mars**. Scr/Pre-production: Melchior. Techniscope & Technicolor. 1964. Para. Dir: Byron Haskin. Prod: Aubrey Schenck, Karl Zabel. Ph: Winton Hoch. Mus: Van Cleave. with: Paul Mantee, Adam West, Vic Lundin. 110 mins.

**Planet of the Vampires**. Scr: Melchior (with Louis Heyward). Color. 1965. AIP release. Dir: Mario Bava. Ph: Antonio Rinaldi. with Barry Sullivan, Norma Bengell, Angel Aranda, Eva Mirandi. 86 mins.

**Death Race 2000**. Orig. Story: Melchior. Color. 1975. New World Productions. Prod: Roger Corman. Dir: Paul Bartel. Scr: Charles Griffeth and Robert Thom. Ph: Tak Fujimoto. with Simone Griffeth, David Carradine, Sylvester Stallone, Joyce Jameson. 88 mins.

Melchior also wrote the screen plays for: **LIVE FAST, DIE YOUNG** (1958), **WHEN HELL BROKE LOOSE** (1958) and **AMBUSH BAY** (1966).



Top left: Between takes on **THE TIME TRAVELERS** a mutant's costume is repaired. Top right: "The spectral faces of the crewmen corpses burst through the earth... Vacant, ashen, hollow-eyed, they stare into nothingness." Middle: The lone struggle for survival—a scene from **ROBINSON CRUSOE ON MARS**. Bottom: "His eyes betray his uneasiness; the fear of facing the alien unknown alone gnaws at the raw edges of his mind."



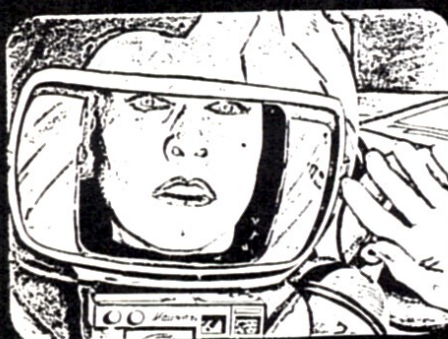
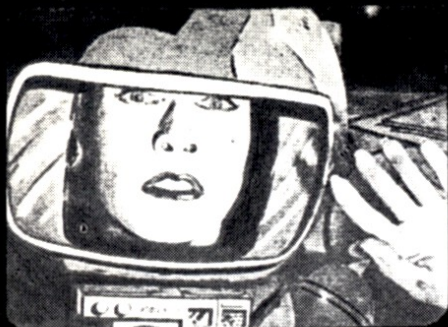


Large miniatures were employed by David Hewitt and Ib Melchior to represent the vast, atomic-blasted, crater launch pad of the Alpha Centauri-bound starship in *THE TIME TRAVELERS*. Below middle: Technicians spray flammable liquids over areas to be later blown up by remote control for a sequence in which mutants sabotage the ship prior to blast off. Right: Huge second level of the Android Factory (top) is in actuality a six foot wide model built in perspective to match the full-sized set (bottom).



**BEHIND-THE-SCENES**

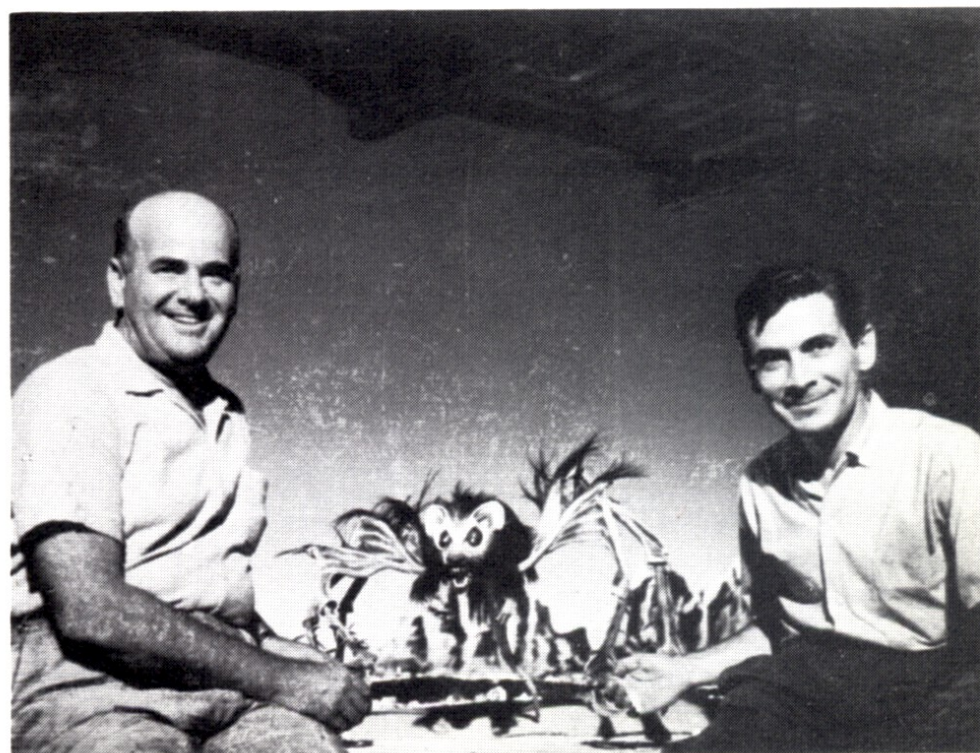
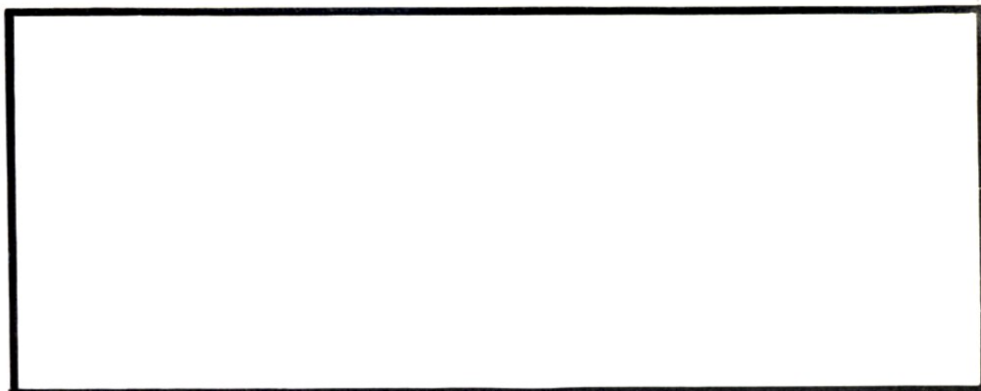




Above top: An original 35mm test shot photographed by conventional methods. Middle: The negative conversion (sandwiching of positive print and negative). Bottom: Final composite positive (print) renders cartoon-like image—the effect intended for the Mars' sequences in *THE ANGRY RED PLANET*. Below: A negative of the first successful test of the Cinemagic process.

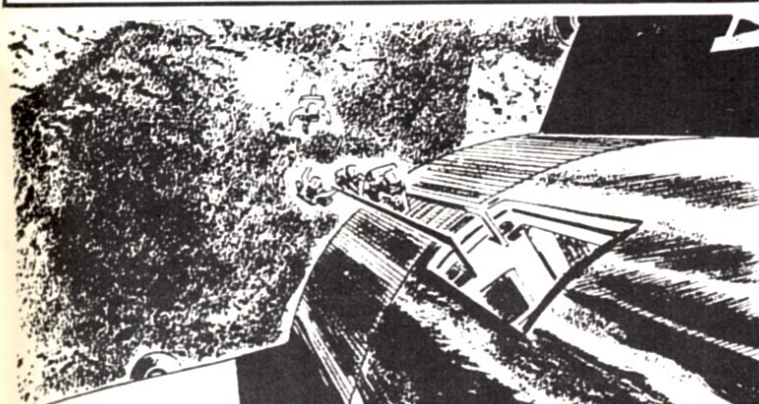
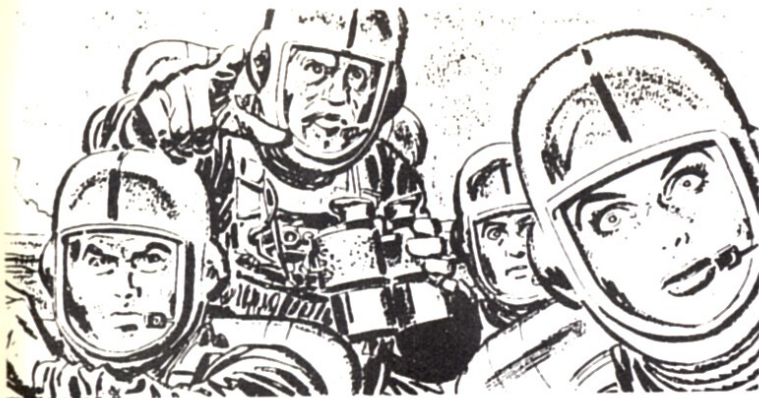


Ib Melchior worked with master cameraman Stanley Cortez (*THE MAGNIFICENT AMBERSON'S*, *3 FACES OF EVE*, etc.) and producer Maurer to help achieve the tone range needed for the conversion to Cinemagic. Light and shadow were emphasized in the black and white shooting and used in a stylized, almost expressionistic manner—even the actors all wore dead-white make-up toward this effect. Further, shooting the Mars sequences on black and white film with its faster speeds enabled Cortez to achieve a depth-of-field uncommon with miniatures of such relatively small size.



Above: Production shots from *THE ANGRY RED PLANET*. Bottom: Sid Pink (L) and Norman Maurer, co-producers of the film, on the miniature Mars set.





Above: Alex Toth story boards for **THE ANGRY RED PLANET** illustrate (top left) a scene on the lake; (bottom left) the space travelers fleeing the giant ameoba; (top right) the attack of the bizarre batratspidercrab and (bottom right) space travelers exploring the Martian jungle.

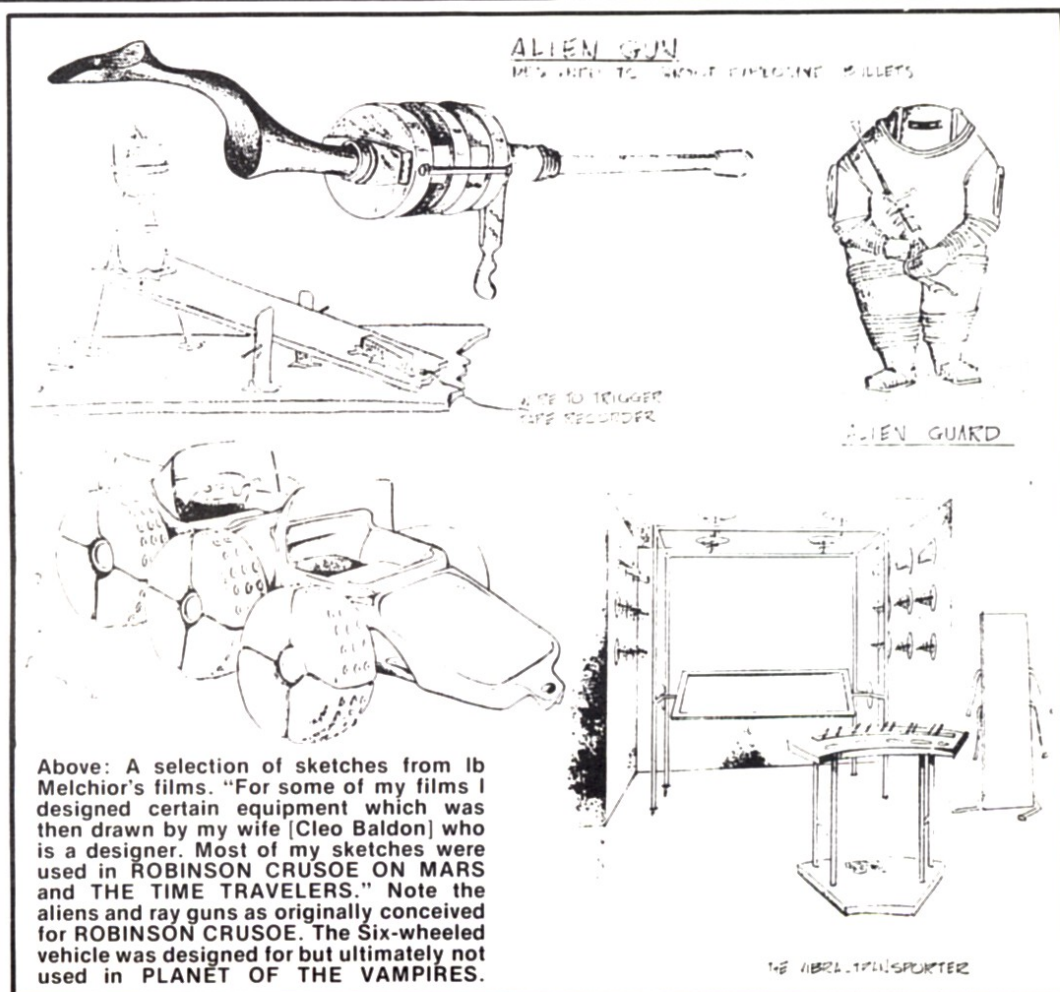
Ib Melchior's resourceful direction of **THE ANGRY RED PLANET** made the most of its low-budget (\$160,000), short shooting schedule (10 days) and its ambitious premises. But anyone familiar with motion picture production knows that film making requires the combination of many skills. In the case of this film, Melchior was aided by the creative work of its co-producer, Norman Maurer. Maurer is credited with having spent over a year developing Cinemagic—a process intended to alter the filmed image to create "live-action cartooning". Below he comments on his involvement with the film:

"I was in full charge of physical production and did all the production design, including all the sets and monsters. [Co-producer] Sid Pink took care of the cast—most of it—writer, director, cameraman, and editor. I commissioned the balance. Stanley Cortez was chosen because of his tremendous reputation—also he was available because he wanted to prove he could turn in a good job on a 10 day schedule...he proved it!

"[Cinemagic] is similar to the Eastman "tone-line" process. A positive 35mm (black and white) and a negative were sandwiched together—printed on a third film through a specially built and designed pair of small lucite lenses to bend the light. The film (print) was then exposed in red onto color film.

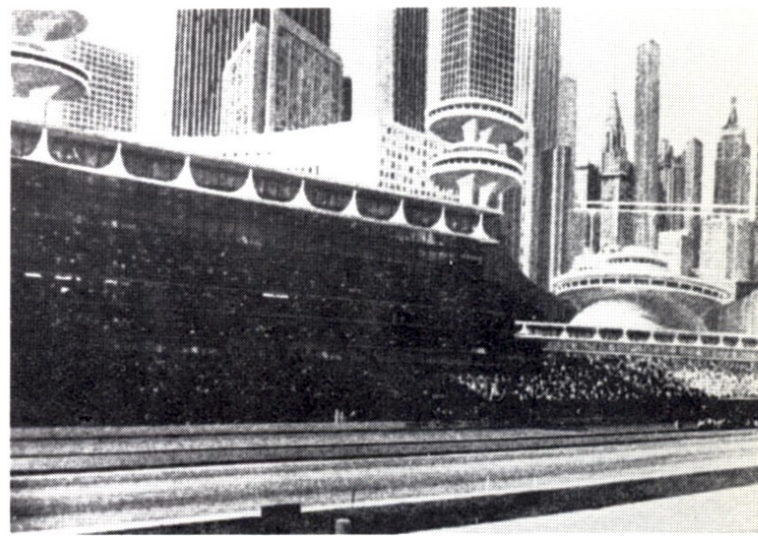
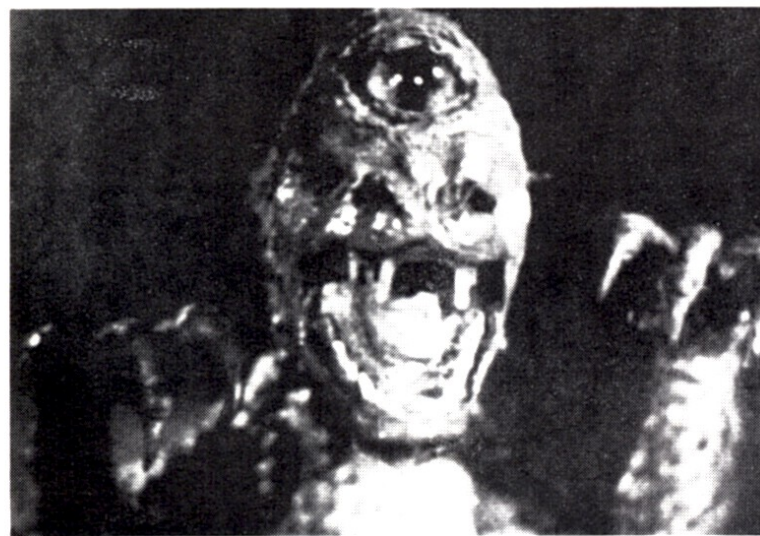
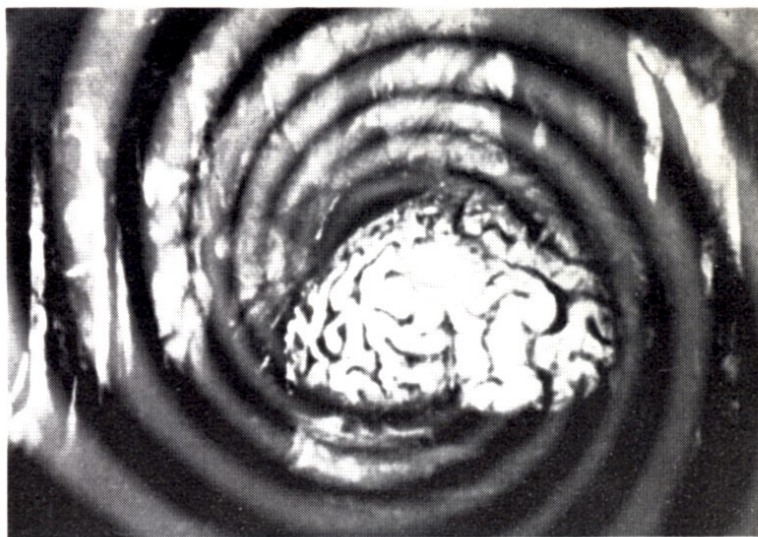
"Pathe lab never succeeded in controlling my process under production pressures—some scenes were perfect—others failed. [The film] could have been far better if Sid had allowed us a bit more time. He advertised a release date long before the process was perfected and we were forced to use what we had even if it wasn't right...it was very successful financially."

Mr. Maurer is a film producer, writer, and director of a number of TV shows and pilots, and, among others the film **THE MAD ROOM**.



Above: A selection of sketches from Ib Melchior's films. "For some of my films I designed certain equipment which was then drawn by my wife [Cleo Baldon] who is a designer. Most of my sketches were used in **ROBINSON CRUSOE ON MARS** and **THE TIME TRAVELERS**." Note the aliens and ray guns as originally conceived for **ROBINSON CRUSOE**. The Six-wheeled vehicle was designed for but ultimately not used in **PLANET OF THE VAMPIRES**.





Above left and top right: Scenes from JOURNEY TO THE 7TH PLANET. The animated "rodent" creature was shot and added to the film in the U.S.A. According to Melchior, "When the film, produced in Denmark by Pink, arrived here it was not in professional enough state to be distributed. AIP had me re-do several things here as best possible: the opening montage; the monsters in the cave; a complete dubbing job . . ." Scenes of ray-guns being fired were created by etching lines into the emulsion of the original film. Middle right: Poor effects destroyed REPTILICUS even before the army did. Bottom right: The stylized, futuristic New York skyline of DEATH RACE 2000; Jack Rabin did the original painting and optical matte for the scene. In the 50's Rabin worked on such films as ROCKET SHIP X-M, KRONOS, ATOMIC SUBMARINE, NIGHT OF THE HUNTER and others.



If NBC's new INVISIBLE MAN teleseries can live up to the quality of the pilot (aired May and Sept.) the network not only has a successful show on its hands - it has a truly different type of entertainment show.

The plot is based only loosely on the H.G. Wells's story; yet manages to retain quality in the translation. The show's pilot contained just enough of the right elements to make it intriguing, different, and certainly a welcome relief from the "relevant" cop and situation comedy shows which have frequented television far too long.

The story centers around scientist Daniel Weston (David McCallum) who, while attempting to find a method of tele-transporting material objects, inadvertently discovers a way to make them invisible. Weston uses his invention on himself - not knowing that the effect is irreversible - and then is forced to destroy his invention rather than allow the military to use it for destructive purposes.

A good deal of human interest is offered in the characters of Weston and his wife (Melinda Fee), also a scientist no less, and co-worker on his experiments. Weston is a likeable idealist with hopes of working on a peaceful invention, who just happens to get caught up in a lot of nasty intrigue. He even gets to smile a few times, which is refreshing in the days of the anti-hero - when even the good guys are crabby.

David McCallum is a good choice for the series, not only for his contemporary "youth" appeal, but also because his distinctive voice and ability to act narratively give him as much presence as if he could be seen. He has a penchant for and lends himself very well to science-fiction and horror-type roles: FRANKENSTEIN; THE TRUE STORY; OUTER LIMITS; HAUSER'S MEMORY; a reading of Lovecraft's "Rats in the Walls" on record. (When is someone going to get him into a spaceship?)

The choice of Weston's adversaries is timely -- for who could be better than the guys at the Pentagon, dreaming of "invisible armies?" In addition to the U.S. military establishment, foreign military powers and self seeking private concerns were also hinted at, leaving the field wide open for a lot of "good" enemies and proper antagonists to Weston's idealistic character. Weston's overseer on the project (Jackie Cooper in the pilot) is interesting - for we never really know who's side he's on.

Plenty of action was offered. Fight scenes were fast-paced and, for the most part, unique: the invisible Weston cornered in a room by startled security guards who appear to be battling nothing other than an assailing chair; a shocked Cooper knocked flat by someone who "isn't there." The chase scenes were well-staged with guns being fired into apparent nothingness (did they get him or not?) and even a car chase which culminates in a fiery crash.

Although most of the story was well-scripted television fare, a few weak spots and "cute" dialogue did show through. The Pentagon brass were a little too stereotyped with their over-eager "smiling-cobra" faces, just waiting to get their hands on Weston and his invention. Likewise, the sequence where Weston is shot was overdone and misleading. The audience follows Weston through the streets to a hospital, complete with heavy breathing and blood which seems to drip out of the air. By the time he gets to his doctor friend, one is sure that he's dying, though he dismisses it later as "only a flesh wound." (Yes he really did say it.) They couldn't let us get by without a "suffering hero" bit. One possible real problem with this show is its danger of being turned into another FUGITIVE-type show. Hope's are that this can be averted via some imaginative writing.

Anyone even slightly interested in special effects will find the invisible effects nothing less than superb. Done through a process which combines video tape and film, viewers are able to see actors actually writing with an invisible pen, Weston's coffee cup seemingly hovering in the air as he drinks from it, and realistically moving "peopleless" clothing. A scene in a motel which has Weston showily disappearing before a mirror was especially striking.

To complement the effects, there are plenty of interesting gadgets on hand. Weston conducts his experiments in an impressive laboratory setting complete with multi-buttoned computers and formidable-looking machinery that emits the brilliant laser-like beam which makes objects fade and disappear.

All in all, THE INVISIBLE MAN was exciting, and just plain fun. Now, if we can just get some of those cop shows to disappear....

William Castle's production, BUG, offers pyromaniac ancient insects from deep within the Earth delivered to the surface via a fathomless earthquake fissure.

Though inhibited by atmospheric pressure, the bugs make good use of one of man's most prolific technological products -- the automobile. As they eat carbon, the bugs travel from place to place munching on plentiful wastes in the engines and exhaust pipes of cars causing disastrous fires wherever they go and, of course, exploding the vehicles by igniting the gasoline.

BUG is very tense at the beginning, especially after we see two people burned alive when an infested truck explodes. The insect sequences are realistic and creepy; the bugs suggesting alarming images of the nasty cockroach, only bigger and certainly more dangerous. But after a pretty nice young girl has her ear burned through and Bradford Dillman's wife is set on fire by a bug in her hair, it becomes apparent that this is a downer film. Some pretty good people are blown up, burned and even a household cat has to die in agony. (Come on, where is the comedy relief, guys?)

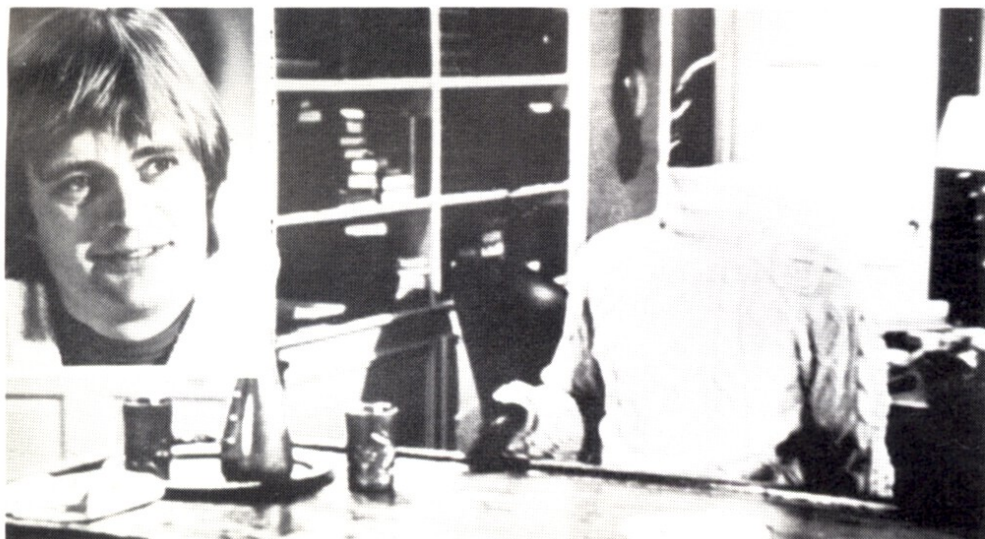
BUG would have been even more depressing had not the second half of the film fallen apart in the absurdity of Parmiter's research with the insects. He eventually breeds them with cockroaches to produce a super creature which can exist on the surface of the Earth, set fires and best of all ---- devour raw meat. The bugs wind up eating a woman alive and make an attempt at their creator while he is asleep. All pretty gory stuff, yet its effect lost when we are offered a silly scene where the bugs (supposedly capable of some super communication with each other) spell out the scientist's name on the wall with their bodies.

If this was supposed to be a dream sequence or a scene to show that the doctor had gone insane, it lacked some transition or indication that this was what was happening. As nothing was offered, the "you've got to be kidding" syndrome set in.

Effect-wise, the film picks up in the end with a fine, glowing-red, hellish scene which culminates in the death of the monster and its creator.

BUG makes it about one half of the time -- so look for it at a two-for-the-price-of-one matinee.

By [illegible]



The movie  
that will  
scare  
the HELL  
into you!





PROMISES, PROMISES.....  
a preview of upcoming films  
by Robert H. Dyke

THE STAR WARS, George Lucas' long anticipated space epic (a la FLASH GORDON), finally begins production this January in Europe. Xmas '75 is the scheduled release.

Bees will attack New York in Irwin Allen's THE SWARM (Stirling Silliphant scripting).

Frank Herbert's DUNE is to be helmed under the questionable talents of Alexandro (EL TOPO) Jodorowsky. Dan O'Bannon, who did DARK STAR, will handle the special effects. O'Bannon also has an original screenplay, THEY BITE, in pre-production.

Gene Roddenberry wants 'big name stars' for cameos in his feature version of STAR TREK.

A 3D CURSE OF THE CAT PEOPLE? Anyway, that's what Amicus claims it's preparing.

Ilya Salkind and Pierre Spengler (THE THREE MUSKETEERS) claim that Mario Puzo's screenplay for their coming multi-million dollar SUPERMAN will treat the comic book hero with respect. The destruction of Krypton will be depicted as well as the Man of Steel's encounters with "natural disasters."

MGM's six million dollar LOGAN'S RUN will utilize actual holograms for one sequence in which Michael York "walks through himself." Peter Ustinov appears as the last man alive in Washington, D.C. (he lives in the Senate with 300 cats). Easter release.

British Lion's THE MAN WHO FELL TO EARTH is nearing completion. Nicholas Roeg is directing David Bowie and Buck Henry.

Looking for investors is a production company that wants to do a re-make of THE THING FROM ANOTHER WORLD. Donald Sutherland and Julie Christie have agreed to star if the money is raised. Max Von Sydow has made a similar deal to appear as an astronaut who finds a lost civilization in South America in the proposed VALLEY OF TIME.

Sensurround returns for the Universal WW II film, MIDWAY.

Edgar Rice Burroughs gets it again as Amicus plans to do AT THE EARTH'S CORE.

Brian DePalma plans to rely heavily on multi-screen effects for THE DEMOLISHED MAN but the dismal box office response to his PHANTOM OF THE PARADISE has placed a question mark on future projects.

THE ENCOUNTER, a film about "when man meets the aliens", is in pre-production.

Dino DeLaurentis and Paramount have announced that they will produce a re-make of KING KONG for '76 release. However, Universal has slapped a multi-million dollar lawsuit against them claiming it had a verbal contract with RKO for the KONG rights.

A production company is talking to William (MAD) Gaines about doing the EC classic, BY GEORGE.

The old reliables at Hammer will be cranking out TO THE DEVIL A DAUGHTER and THE SATANIST as well as Rider Haggard's ALLAN QUATERMAIN ESQUIRE AND THE QUEST FOR THE HOLY FLOWER.

Phillip Dick's DO ANDROIDS DREAM OF ELECTRIC SHEEP? is to be produced utilizing the Magicam technique.

Robert Altman still wants to do Kurt Vonnegut's BREAKFAST OF CHAMPIONS.

Francis Ford Coppola has signed a deal with NBC in which he'll produce and direct a six plus hour feature (to be shown as a "mini-series") dealing with human reaction to contact with aliens.

The once imaginative James Bond series refuses to call it quits as THE SPY WHO LOVED ME begins production.

Yul Brynner and Max Von Sydow have completed their roles in THE ULTIMATE WARRIOR. Set in 2003, the population of the U. S. has been reduced to 100,000 due to disease and pollution. Brynner plays a professional fighter hired by Sydow to protect the last remnants of civilization (sounds like a futuristic MAGNIFICENT SEVEN).

Magicam will be utilized by low budget producer David Sheldon for still another disaster film LEVIATHAN (a giant storm wrecks the West Coast).

SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER (formerly SINBAD AT THE END OF THE WORLD) is Ray Harryhausen's current project. This time he has a three million dollar budget. Let's hope that Beverly (JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS) Cross has written a script worthy of his effects.

The collapse of a big city's life support system is the theme of Dalton Trumbo's MEGALOPOLIS for Paramount.

Orson Welle's famous Halloween Broadcast will be recreated for ABC.

Ralph Bakshi's animated WAR LIZARDS is ready for release.

Animator Larry Larson has completed stop motion effects for TIMESPACE.

George Pal says that his next film will have a sci-fi theme. Apparently his plans for the DOC SAVAGE sequel that Phillip Jose Farmer was to script have been abandoned.

American International is still circulating Pal's old WHEN THE SLEEPER AWAKES screenplay in the hope of attracting outside investors.

Dela Productions is shooting MARGENAUT IN THE TRIANGLE, an "adventure documentary" about the Bermuda Triangle (again?) and Atlantis.

The screenrights to Nancy Freedman's JOSHUA, SON OF NONE (the cloning of JFK) have been acquired by a New York ad agency.

A new Tarzan? Why not --- it's been a few years. Robert (CHINATOWN, SHAMPOO) Towne is busy writing TARZAN OF THE APES.

CYBERNIA is being scripted by Charles Griffeth for Roger Corman's New World Pictures. The story deals with the fight to gain control of an "ultimate computer" in the future.

After 35 films with Max Rosenberg, Milton Subotsky has left Amicus to form two production companies. The Great Fantastic Film Company will produce "films of fantasy and imagination, science fiction, and superhero adventures based on comic books." Negotiations are under way to acquire the options for SPIDERMAN and THE INCREDIBLE HULK now being held by Steve (FRITZ THE CAT) Kratz. Subotsky's other company, Swords and Sorcery Productions, will do "films of fantastic adventure." S & S's first effort will be three features based on Lin Carter's THONGOR novels. The films will be produced back-to-back with an overall budget of \$7,000,000. Subotsky promises that stop motion animation will be utilized to create the many mythical creatures found in the novels. Release dates are to be summer '77, Xmas '77 and summer '78.

FUTUREWORLD, the followup to WESTWORLD is still scheduled by MGM but without Michael Crichton scripting or directing.

Steven Spielberg, director of the entertaining but over-praised JAWS, has announced that his next effort will be a sci-fi based on his own script.

SPACE STATION ONE, Walt Disney Productions first space travel feature, begins filming in June.

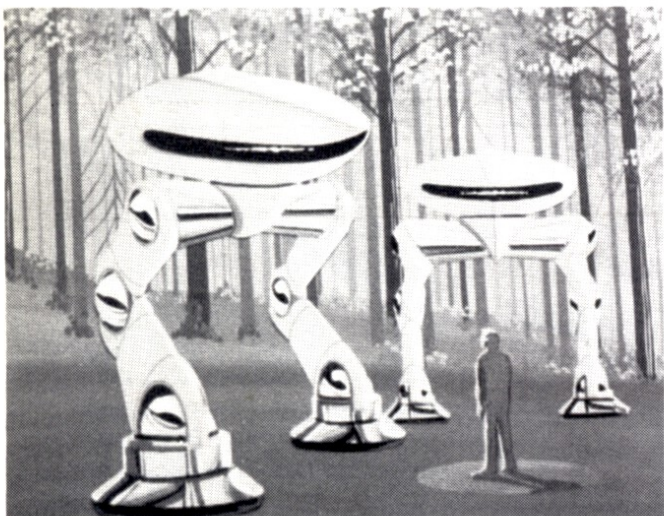
Independent filmmaker Robert Blair is completing his experimental short SOLITARY DEAL about a man pursued by death. Don Jordan stars.

Writer D. Douglas Hurd has completed his second screenplay based on the Lovecraft mythos, entitled SHOGOTH. His first, CRY OF CTHULHU is in pre-production.

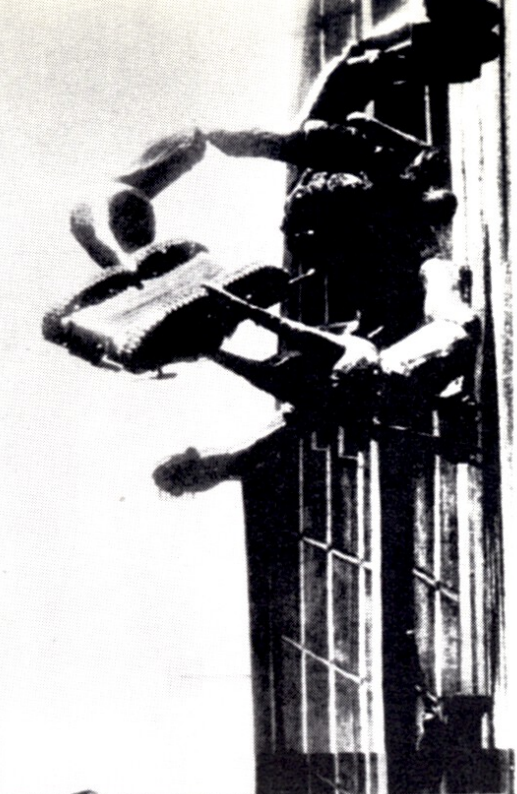
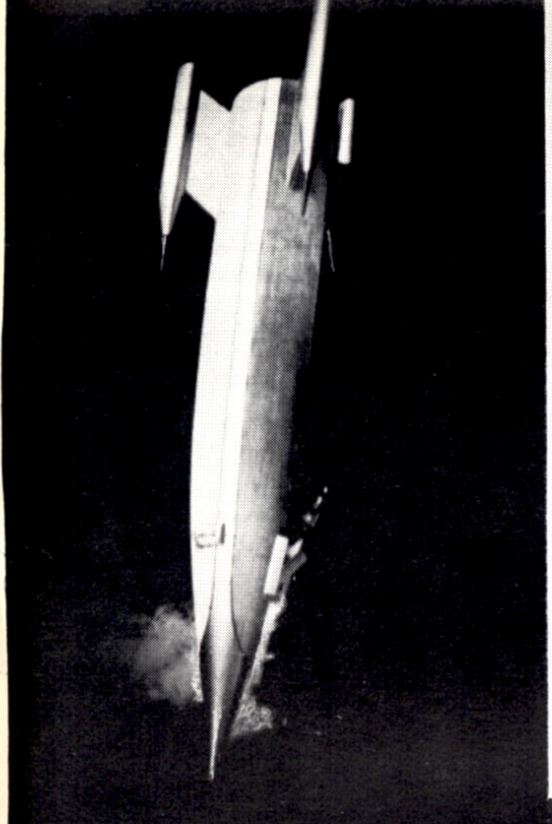
Whatever happened to...the completed TV pilot of WAR OF THE WORLDS?..... plans to produce STRANGER IN A STRANGE LAND and CHILDHOOD'S END?.....Peter Max's COSMIC ADVENTURES OF ALICE IN WONDERLAND?.....the Disney Studio's ability to create fantasies that truly appeal to all ages?.....Gene Roddenberry's SPECTRE?...Doug Trumbull's PYRAMID?...Doug Trumbull?

A final warning!...THE MEAT CLEAVER MASSACRE and THREE ON A MEATHOOK have been scheduled for production.

Top:pre-prod. art for THE ENCOUNTER. Bot.: Larry Larson animates TIMESPACE creature.







FANTASCENE is the unique new pictorial magazine of fantasy, science-fiction and horror films. In future issues you'll see many never-seen-before pictures and rare behind-the-scenes information covering all types of fantastic films -- the classics, the low-budget "B" films, and the offbeat, uncovered films. If you've found FANTASCENE 1 of interest, you'll be sure to find future issues even more so.....Here's a preview of features planned for upcoming issues:

THE FILMS OF KAREL ZEMAN; THE QUATERMASS FILMS REVEALED!; Portfolios on: THE TIME MACHINE, THIS ISLAND EARTH, FIRST MEN IN THE MOON (including rare scenes of Harryhausen's animated Selenites); behind-the-scenes on the low-budget film effects of JACK RABIN, IRVING BLOCK and LOUIS DEWITT (KRONOS, ROCKETSHIP X-M, etc.); INVADERS FROM MARS retrospective; THE CURSE OF THE DEMON revealed; ROGER CORMAN retrospective; full coverage revisit to the far-ahead-of-its-time teleseries, THE OUTER LIMITS; the strange cinema of EDGAR ULMER; the films of MARIO BAVA; the RUSSIAN SPACE FILM EPICS; CARTOON ANIMATION in the fantastic cinema.....and many others!

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